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The logic of love : a theological approach to the relationship between ethics and emotion

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The Logic of Love

A Theological Approach to the Relationship between Ethics and Emotion

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A thesis submitted as required
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

This thesis presents a theological approach to the relationship between ethics and emotion.

Part One canvasses some modern attempts to relate ethics and emotion. A cluster of scientific approaches to the relationship is compared to the more philosophical and cognitive approaches of Solomon and Nussbaum. Each set of approaches derives respectively from competing Kantian and Nietzschean legacies, but both sets are problematic.

Part Two is a theological investigation, which examines ethics and emotion in Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, and Kierkegaard. The theological approach discerned in these theologians is called a 'logic of love'. This multivalent term describes, firstly, the grounds of our ethical deliberations as subjects who love various moral goods. It also describes, secondly, a 'theologic' of grace and command for the 'reordering' of love.

For Augustine, our inalienable propensity to respond in love to the goods of creation is a constitutive element of our humanity. However, such love is disordered: some goods are sought voraciously, while others are ignored without concern. The reordering of the Holy Spirit brings enjoyment of God and of one another in God. Aquinas extends Augustine's account by extensively analysing the responses of love in a complex moral field. Calvin emphasises the problem of disordered love, and its consequences for thought. For Kierkegaard, the subjective nature of deliberative logic demands a fundamental shift in the affections.

The theological investigation culminates in a theological theory of virtue. Drawing from the four theologians and from New Testament virtue lists, virtues are found to represent richly emotional and multifaceted responses to the complexities of reality.

Part Three examines some social implications. The logic of love uncovers the distortions of the consumer economy, and a series of consequent distortions in ethical discussion. It also offers some directions for debate with liberal political philosophy.



Dedication and Thanks

This thesis is for my wife **Mary-Anne**.

I love you; it cost you; we couldn't have done this without you.

It is also in memory of my father **Jack Cameron (1916-2000)**.

You knew what we didn't, yet loved me enough to let us go.

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Thanks for showing me how emotions have their own logic.

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How did you learn such faithfulness?

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Select Abbreviations

General

<i>BAGD</i>	Bauer, Walter, William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, Second Edition</i> . Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1958.
ET	English Translation
<i>NA26</i>	Kurt Aland et al. (eds), <i>The Greek New Testament, Nestlé-Aland 26th edition</i> . United Bible Societies: 1983.
<i>NPNF 1, 2</i>	<i>A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church</i> (first or second series)
<i>NRSV</i>	<i>The Holy Bible</i> , New Revised Standard Version. Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
<i>OED</i>	Simpson, J.A., and E.S.C. Weiner, eds. <i>The Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd Edition</i> . Oxford: Clarendon, 1989.

Primary theological works

(see first notation and bibliography for editions used)

<i>1 Ep. Ioh. tract.</i>	Augustine, <i>Homilies on the First Epistle of John</i>
<i>Conf.</i>	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i>
<i>Cont. Jul.</i>	Augustine, <i>Against Julian</i>
<i>De bon. conj.</i>	Augustine, <i>On the Good of Marriage</i>
<i>De civ. Dei</i>	Augustine, <i>The City of God</i>
<i>De doct. Christ.</i>	Augustine, <i>On Christian Doctrine</i>
<i>De mor. ecc. cath.</i>	Augustine, <i>On the Morals of the Catholic Church</i>
<i>De nat. et grat.</i>	Augustine, <i>On Nature and Grace</i>
<i>De nupt. et conc.</i>	Augustine, <i>On Marriage and Concupiscence</i>
<i>De spir. et lit.</i>	Augustine, <i>On the Spirit and the Letter</i>
<i>En. in Ps.</i>	Augustine, <i>Expositions on the Psalms</i>
<i>Inst.</i>	John Calvin, <i>Institutes of the Christian Religion</i>
<i>Summa</i>	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologica</i>

Explanatory Notes

The thesis is written as three Parts, which embrace Chapters and Sections. I will endeavour to summarise each at their beginning.

Stylistic conventions follow the *Chicago Manual of Style (Fourteenth Edition)*, which the University of London stipulates among its acceptable stylistic conventions. Some stylistic decisions might require further clarification:

- Where words and phrases in original quotations are emphasised, *the emphasis is always original*, and in the style used by that author (or their translator). Since no emphases have been added to quotations by this author, it was not thought necessary always to signal that emphasis is original.
- In quotations, closed ellipsis (...) represents omissions made from the original by this author. Spaced ellipsis (. . .) reflects ellipsis used as a stylistic device by the original author. (It is favoured particularly by Nietzsche.)
- “Double quotation marks” are used to quote specific authors, while ‘single quotation marks’ are used for unusual terms. For consistency, this practise has been extended to block-quotes from other authors (regardless of their own practice), since block quotations in this work include a very large number of special terms, and comparatively few quotations from other authors. Thus it was judged best to reserve the single quotation for these frequent special terms, to enhance readability. (Quotations within a quotation appearing in the main text will of necessity employ single quotation marks.)
- For many of the primary sources, a generally agreed first publication date is given in brackets after the title of the work in its first footnoted reference. *Circa* should always be understood.
- In the interests of readability, traditional Roman-Arabic references to Aelred’s *Spiritual Friendship*, Aquinas’ *Summa*, Calvin’s *Institutes* (and to a lesser extent, Augustine’s *Confessions* and *City of God*), have generally been retained in the main text, while other references occur in footnotes. This was judged to aid readability in two ways. Firstly, general practice in theological literature seems to prefer in-text references for these works. Secondly, readers may appreciate the opportunity instantly to note the reference’s relation to the architectonics of these

larger works. (This consideration is less relevant for other authors, where works consulted embody a wider corpus.)

- However, also to enhance readability, references to these works may occur in footnotes if details specific to some edition of the work are relevant, and/or because pagination seemed a more helpful referent than the traditional reference. (These two considerations were also relevant to Augustine's *Confessions* and *City of God*.) Because of these factors, and given nature of this thesis, strict consistency (with all references either in footnotes, or in main text) was judged to be a liability.
- For consistency and readability, references for block quotations are by footnote, except as per the previous point.
- All biblical quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version. Abbreviations follow *Chicago 14th*, as do both the retention of unabbreviated references in the main text and the restriction of abbreviations to parenthetical references.



Introduction

(Tears in the kitchen:) “Let’s bandage it, and then I’ll kiss it better.”

(One friend to another:) “You make me so mad I could hit you!”

(or perhaps instead:) “Let’s make love.”

(At the market:) “I must have it! How much do you want?”

(In an office:) “She’ll pay—I’ll destroy her.”

A brief thought about some everyday scenarios quickly reveals how intricately intertwined are our actions and our emotions.

In this introduction, I will make some observations about this intertwining, and will suggest that modern thought seems deeply unable to make it intelligible. I will then indicate how the three Parts of the thesis offer a more satisfactory *theological* account of the relationship between ethics and emotion.

a) Ethics and emotion: some modern difficulties

If it is obvious that our actions are intricately connected to our emotions, then it seems equally obvious that ethical reflection might straightforwardly assess the interaction between these actions and their associated emotions. Ethical reflection might seek to answer such questions as these:

- Are emotions subject to moral evaluation? If so, how?
- When should emotion help direct my action?
- Should action ever ‘go against’ an emotion?
- In acts highly charged with emotion, are agents always responsible?

The recent renaissance of virtue- and character-oriented ethics warns us against a preoccupation merely with actions, and invites further considerations:

- Do ‘virtues’ and ‘vices’ involve emotional dispositions?
- Should certain emotions be cultivated?
- Can one’s desire be shaped by oneself? Can desire’s emotional dimension so be shaped?

To open up the relationship, a heuristic beginning may be to consider emotion loosely as ‘that which moves us’. This would surely provide a handy, if imprecise, starting point for ethical reflection: what should be our moral understanding of ‘that which moves us’? When

should we be so moved? When should we remain ‘unmoved’? In framing the matter thus, the implicit connotation of emotion for ethics is made explicit—and by more than merely a play on the verb ‘to move’. For ‘emotion’ and ‘movement’ flow together down the same river of Western thought.

The Stoic Chrysippus understood that literal ‘movements’ of the soul inside the chest caused the tuggings and sensations associated with (what we would call) emotion. For Aquinas, passion reflected a kind of passivity in the soul, but also a kind of ‘movement’ as the soul drew toward humanity’s true end. Movement is reflected in the etymology of the English word ‘emotion’. In *OED* what begins as a “moving out” becomes a physical disturbance or agitation, and then “[a]ny agitation or disturbance of the mind ... any vehement or excited mental state”. Of course this history is retained in the embedded ‘-motion’;¹ and even if the emphasis is probably on ‘motions’ conceived as internal, only a hairsbreadth would seem to separate “I’m moved” from “I’m moved to action”. We need not hold that all external or all internal movements are respectively causes or effects of the other; yet surely something like this is often the case.

But although the general locus of enquiry would seem uncontroversially to lie within the broader ambit of ethics, the matter has not been at all straightforward for Westerners. For most people, questions such as the ones above are new and surprising (even if a surge of interest is now causing them to be asked more often).

The legacy of a Kantian account² has been the widespread view that decisions to action *should never* be touched by emotion. Reciprocally, a parallel minority view held ethics *only* to consist in “extrascientific”³ emotive utterance, conveying only attitudes of approval or disapproval. In the first kind of view, a rift lies between ethics and emotion; while in the second, the rift is between ethics and reason. Both views rely upon a basic fissure between reason and emotion, with this fissure grounding various pejorative terms that are deployed to render some ethical arguments suspect.

Thus in popular parlance, an ‘emotive’ ethical argument is considered unsound by definition; just as arguments called ‘rationalisations’ are allegedly driven by an ‘irrational’—that is emotional—impetus, which is to be unmasked and condemned. Both forms of pejorative would seem clearly to evidence the post-Kantian rift, where only

¹ *OED* s.v. “emotion”. *OED* etymology gives a Latin origin mediated via French, with ‘movement’ as a key historical component.

² See below, 46.

³ Charles L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), 21. See also below, 29.

‘reasonable’ utterances are welcome. Concomitant to this negative account of emotion is a conception of their *unruliness*, the suspicion of which has ancient antecedents and a long lineage in Western thought. Decisions made about the mode and magnitude of this unruliness predicates optimism or pessimism about the possibility of ‘emotional control’ (or some related idea), so as to live with the ‘rifts’ on view.

However, a recent and very different legacy, inaugurated by Nietzsche, also lays claim (somewhat subversively) to ancient antecedents.⁴ It celebrates the ‘unruliness’ and even seeks to assert excellence as intrinsic to it. On this basis, negative accounts of emotion for ethics are challenged, so much so that a sea-change is currently in process against the older negativity. Accounts arising from this newer legacy seek to affirm the place of emotion in ethics and do *not* seek to close the rifts we have mentioned. Rather, they declare as fictive all and every conception of this landscape as being ‘fissured’ at all.

Given this turbulent history, it has become very difficult for moderns to articulate the interconnections between emotion and ethics. Consider this example, in a journal grappling with the intersection of public policy, legal responsibility and anthropology. Sidney Callahan argues for (what we might call) a recursive relationship between (what he calls) the “tutoring roles” of reason and emotion. Callahan’s summary will deserve further attention; but for now, what is of interest is the high level of complexity involved in joining these two realms for the sake of ethics:

If one would decide wisely and well, the best strategy would include both trusting and skeptical awareness of all of one’s capacities and reactions. An individual is far too complex and personal consciousness (and pre-consciousness) operates too instantaneously, for simple linear processing. It is essential to engage in fully extended, fully inclusive, circular, parallel processing of the dynamic interplays of consciousness.

While I am assessing my reasoning and arguments by rational criteria, I should pay attention to emotions, even those fleeting negative feelings that may be most in danger of defensive suppression. In the same process my emotional responses are in turn being rationally and emotionally assessed for appropriateness, or for their infantile or qualitative characteristics. Deficits and numbness should also be considered. As rational argument proceeds I can seek to enrich the process with emotional intuitions and associations, imagined moral scenarios, and the testimony of the wise and good. Can these emotions become universal, can they produce good consequences, are these feelings consistent with my other best emotions? Communication about my feelings with others would be a further test. Certainly, I should also continually compare my rational arguments to the critical reasoning of reflective experts, as found, say, in analytic articles or ethical guidelines. New ideas, arguments, or emotions should be continually checked and mutually adjusted.⁵

⁴ See below, 52.

⁵ Sidney Callahan, “The Role of Emotion in Ethical Decisionmaking,” *Hastings Center Report* 18 (1988): 13.

While there are elements of wisdom to this advice, what is most striking is the sheer complexity of the procedure. Is anyone really up to the task of “fully extended, fully inclusive, circular, parallel processing of the dynamic interplays of consciousness”? Or is the problem simply that modern thought is cumbersome? Here is cause to fear that modern attempts to reunite thought, emotion and ethics might simply have run aground.

b) A theological approach to ethics and emotion

This thesis presents a theological approach to the relationship between ethics and emotion, and will hold the Kantian and Nietzschean legacies against the theological account. The two legacies will be reviewed in Part One, and the theological investigation will form the substantive body of the thesis, in Part Two. Part Three is much briefer, and will offer some social implications arising from the theological investigation. I will now summarise the course of the argument throughout these three Parts.

Part One canvasses some modern attempts to relate ethics and emotion. Word-usage sheds no light upon the relationship of emotion to ethics, because definitions of ‘emotion’ are too broad to be useful, and ‘passion’ seems to span the moral spectrum. Scientific approaches to emotion offer little clarification to a definition of emotion, and are deleterious to the understanding of emotion insofar as they do not address human ‘goals’ or ‘ends’. On the face of it, neither emotions nor ethics can be understood without some teleological conception; but the scientific accounts, and Kant from whom they derive, share an inability to relate emotions to *telos* and to ethics. Indeed, the way Kant signals his respect for some emotions serves to threaten his view that they have no place in ethics.

By contrast, the philosophical and cognitive approaches to emotion of Robert C. Solomon and Martha C. Nussbaum, deriving from Nietzsche, are certainly more concerned with ends. Nietzsche celebrates various ‘intoxicating’ excellences that are intrinsic to emotion, and building upon Nietzsche’s view, Solomon understands emotion as a means of constructing reality for the advancement of personal self esteem. Nietzsche represents to Nussbaum the culmination of an ‘ascent’ of love, by which she means a progressive improvement in historical understandings of love. Nietzsche’s view of emotion allows untrammelled delight in the body and its various sensations. With Nietzsche, both thinkers regard Augustinian Christianity as fundamentally hostile to the body and its emotions. But unlike Nietzsche, whose celebration of emotion entails a caste society ranked by excellence without reference to justice, Solomon and Nussbaum prefer the justice of egalitarian societies and do not engage with this Nietzschean limitation.

Part Two develops a theological account of the relationship between emotion and ethics. In this account, the delighted ‘intoxications’ of emotion are embraced in a point of epistemic and ethical agreement with Nietzsche, since in the theological account, emotions are certainly required for knowledge and ethics. However Christian theology also retains Kant’s commitment to justice, and finds the account of emotion in Nietzsche’s chaotic ‘system’ to be lacking. The theological account effectively relates emotions to ethics, celebrates the centrality of emotion, and retains justice, so making it a more satisfactory account than that of the other two legacies.

The theological account of emotion is called a ‘logic of love’, and the investigation of it proceeds by reference to Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, and Kierkegaard. The ‘logic of love’ is a multivalent term describing, firstly, the grounds of our ethical deliberations as subjects who love various moral goods. It also describes, secondly, a ‘theologic’ of grace and command for the ‘reordering’ of love.

For Augustine, people are situated within an ordered ecology of interdependent goods, and humans are the kind of beings who respond to those goods with various desires, interests, cares, concerns and attractions that Augustine is content simply to call ‘love’. Even though various ‘aspects’ to love can be identified (since the term covers many kinds of response to the plethora of goods that surround people), people’s basic and inalienable propensity to respond in love to the goods of creation is a constitutive element to their being human.

However, such love is disordered. Some goods are sought voraciously, to the exclusion of others that are ignored without concern. Augustine does not object to bodily appetites as such, and his conception of disorder is not a hatred of the body or of bodily life. The real problematic is the hegemonic expansion of various desires so as to exclude any contented love and any real enjoyment of others. In contrast, the divine gift of reordered love brings about a fitting appreciation of the various goods that surround us, and a loving enjoyment of human others. (Both postures are integral to Augustine’s account of a restored and proper love for God.) The reordering is an adventitious divine activity in which we are invited (by command) to participate.

Aquinas brings detail to Augustine’s account by extensively analysing the responses of love in a complex moral field. He shows that with love, certain structures can be discerned. Love refracts into a series of emotional responses that reflect the complex array of goods within moral order, and the responses are in complex recursive relationship with moral reasoning. Augustine had already said as much; but Aquinas tells more of the array of goods, the responses to them, and the relationship between these responses and moral reasoning.

For Thomas, each human is an array of parts and powers. Their 'will' operates as an amalgam of 'intellect' and 'appetite', and human will reaches for humanity's proper end by making intellectual assessments about that end whilst being affected by emotional responses to immediate circumstances. The emotional responses that affect the will reflect the complexity of the moral field, and can be ordinate or inordinate, depending upon their fittingness to humanity's true end. Therefore *virtue* necessarily becomes a central element in moral life. Virtues help people toward their true end, and each virtue is an amalgam of thought, habit and ordered passion. But if people are to become properly ordered to humanity's true end, virtue must itself be ordered by the divine Spirit and Word.

Aquinas equips us better to see how moral reasoning can be misled in various ways by emotion, or can itself mislead emotion (through what Thomas calls *certa malitia*). Drawing upon my own experience, a painful personal example (where my emotions, thoughts and actions seemed viciously to run amok) is used to highlight the strengths and possible shortcomings of Aquinas' conception.

Calvin responds to possible misreadings of Aquinas by emphasising the problem of disordered love. Calvin addresses a faithless unconcern towards God (Thomas's *malitia*) and its consequences for thought. His response reinforces Augustine's anti-Pelagian stance on the depths of human bondage to disordered love, and *apropos* my personal example, reminds me that *I am claimed and loved by God* even while I am deep within errors of thought, emotion and action. Calvin's response reiterates with Aquinas and Augustine the greatness of divinely reordered love. The restoration effected by God is fundamentally an affective reorientation, which entails a heartfelt enjoyment of God and of others.

In different ways, Augustine, Aquinas and Calvin all understand that a chasm of sorts must be crossed. For Augustine, the voracious heart must finally rest in God. For Aquinas, *malitia* can only be overcome by the work of God. For Calvin, faithless unconcern must come under the claim of divine love. For each, only when this chasm is crossed can there be a proper consonance between emotion and ethics.

While perhaps an unlikely theologian, Søren Kierkegaard explicates this chasm and its crossing. For Kierkegaard, movements of the affections are always central to moral deliberation. The subjective nature of deliberative logic demands a fundamental shift in the affections, from random passion and 'objectivity' to a primal affection toward God. In Kierkegaard's understanding, forms of so-called 'Christian emotion' resolve the unsatisfied yearnings of aesthetes, moralists and rigid religionists. Although his proposed 'Christian

emotions' are somewhat inadequate, the cumulative effect of his project counters Nietzschean objections to a moral theology of emotion.

The theological investigation suggests that a good account of affective deliberative logic can be embodied in *a theological theory of virtue*. Virtue theories deal with the habits and emotional dispositions of agents, and do not rate objectivity over subjectivity. A theological theory of virtue retains the best kinds of 'Christian emotion', while giving more detail for the task of deliberation. The logic of love brings unique elements to theological virtue theory as compared to other virtue theories. Drawing from the four theologians and from New Testament virtue lists, virtues are found to represent richly emotional and multifaceted responses to the complexities of reality, which *assist* action (rather than discerning moral order as such). Virtue terms give a descriptive language for the confluence of an agent, his or her affections, and the order of reality. This supple, varied, creative, and *brief* language simultaneously presents an act and a commensurate emotional posture in the heated moment of decision. Emotions and ethical commitments become intelligible alongside one another, and various virtues emerge as the mind 'fuses' an emotion to an ethical commitment. But the possibility of so joining the virtue's components inheres already within the order of reality; and so the various virtues generated by a theological theory of virtue translate the logic of love into normative practises for individuals—certainly more accessibly than is Callahan's "fully extended, fully inclusive, circular, parallel processing of the dynamic interplays of consciousness".⁶

Part Three of the thesis considers implications of the logic of love for a modern *polis*. The consumer economy is a form of life by which moderns seek 'peace', but the logic of love uncovers how it serves a dubious end in a state of constant voracity. Consequently, a series of ethical discussions are distorted when the problems under consideration, and even the interpersonal relationships with which they are concerned, come to be construed as problems of consumption. The logic of love can recover aspects of the moral field that have been missed by this warped consciousness.

After some brief suggestions for debates to be had with liberal political philosophy, the thesis ends when its findings are used to attempt an answer to the questions that commenced this introduction.



⁶ See above, 13.

PART I:

DISCERNING THE PROBLEM

In Chapter One, I will outline some scientific approaches to emotion, showing that these are not able to interpret emotion in any ethical sense. By way of a scientific thinker who admits this limitation (William Lyons), I proceed to two thinkers (Robert Solomon and Martha Nussbaum) who seek to surpass the limitation. For them, the operation of reason is threaded with emotion. Clear implications for ethics follow. In Chapter Two, I show that the scientific approaches to emotion, and that of Solomon and Nussbaum, are respectively traceable to a Kantian and a Nietzschean legacy. Chapter Two closes with the outline of a theological approach that actually has much in common with the Nietzschean legacy whilst retaining a key aspect of Kant.



Chapter II: Approaches to Emotion

In this chapter, I will use five subsections to show a range of modern views about emotion. These largely resolve into two broad movements that have implications and limitations for ethics.

After showing in Section One how general definitions for ‘emotion’ and ‘passion’ embrace a wide range of meanings, I will then describe in Section Two some scientific approaches to emotion, especially in psychology, where a ‘cognitive’ approach seems promising. However, I will also to show that scientific accounts of emotion cannot be meaningfully connected to ethics, despite the attempt to do so in ethical emotivism. Rather, *ethics* seems necessary for a proper understanding of *emotion*. A ‘broader canvas’ is required, going beyond scientific terms of reference. One scientifically oriented thinker (William Lyons, in Section Three) implicitly admits this, since his account requires the concepts of ‘telic order’ and ‘moral field’ to succeed.

In Sections Four and Five, I will introduce two other thinkers whose ‘broader canvas’ reintegrates reason and emotion. In Robert C. Solomon’s project, emotion becomes morally ordered around ‘self-esteem’. In Martha Nussbaum’s ‘ascent of love’, a series of historical ‘discoveries’ about love bring love into harmony with general social aims, making love basic to a ‘universalist’ ethic. Both thinkers single out Augustine for disagreement.

We shall see in Chapter Two that the two broad movements represented in the preceding two paragraphs largely derive, respectively, from the competing legacies of Kant and Nietzsche. (The exception here is Lyons’ theory, which has older antecedents.)

1. What is an emotion?

I will begin here by showing that general definitions for ‘emotion’ and ‘passion’ embrace a wide range of meanings.

Although ethics and emotion might seem straightforwardly interconnected, the matter is actually thoroughly controverted. We might at least hope to begin by answering an innocently simple question: what, actually, *is* an emotion? Kant warned about the inadvisability of basing moral law upon something as imprecise and subjective as feeling—and his view seems vindicated by the sheer volume and extraordinary range of twentieth-century attempts at a definition.

Some argue that emotions are a kind of experience that is primarily ‘feelingful’, while for others they are a complex kind of judging-thought that is not a feeling; and a spectrum of views prevails between these poles. Given this imprecision, on one recent view ‘emotion’ is merely a false categorisation, an obsolete and inappropriate word for three quite different

domains. These three, roughly, are: autonomic bodily reflexes; strongly expressed personal concerns; and social performances. Calling all these ‘emotion’ is as false a grouping as the ‘superlunary objects’ of ancient astronomy (where everything beyond the orbit of the moon was held to be of the same kind).⁷

The term ‘passion’ also confounds us by spanning the moral spectrum. The ten senses supplied by *OED* for ‘passions’ include “an eager outreaching of the mind towards something; an overmastering zeal or enthusiasm for a special object; a vehement predilection”.⁸ This would seem to describe what we have when our awe is inspired. But if ‘passion’ is also “an outburst of anger or bad temper”, then sometimes it is a form of unmitigated evil. Yet ‘passion’ can sometimes be used value-neutrally, to describe “[a]ny kind of feeling in which the mind is affected or moved; a vehement, commanding, or overpowering emotion”—which is simply a broad initial description of feelingful experience. None of these definitions enable us to settle whether or not ‘passion’ is a moral category.

The difficulties of definition are summarised in Robert C. Solomon’s introductory essay in the *Handbook of Emotions*, a collaborative volume responding to recent proliferation in the scientific study of emotions. Solomon is cautionary:

It would be a mistake ... to put too much emphasis on the term ‘emotion’, for its range and meaning have altered significantly over the years, due in part to changes in theories about emotion. So too, the word ‘passion’ has a long and varied history, and we should beware of the misleading assumption that there is a single, orderly, natural class of phenomena that is simply designated by different labels in different languages at different times. The language of ‘passion’ and ‘emotion’ has a history in which various feelings, desires, sentiments, moods, attitudes and more explosive responses enter and from which they exit, depending not on arbitrary philosophical stipulation but on an extensive network of social, moral, cultural and psychological factors.⁹

2. Ethical limitations of scientific definition

I will describe in this section some scientific approaches to emotion, especially in psychology, where a ‘cognitive’ approach seems promising. I will also show how some scientific accounts of emotion fail to make a meaningful connection to ethics, despite the attempt to do so in ethical emotivism. Rather, an account of *ethics* seems necessary for a proper understanding of *emotion*. A ‘broader canvas’ is required, going beyond scientific terms of reference.

⁷ Paul E. Griffiths, *What Emotions Really Are: The Problem of Psychological Categories* (Chicago: 1997), 14-17 & passim.

⁸ *OED* s.v. “passion”. The following quotations are meanings 10, 7 and 6a respectively.

⁹ Robert C. Solomon, “The Philosophy of Emotions,” in *Handbook of Emotions: Second Edition*, eds Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, (New York; London: Guilford Press, 2000), 4.

a) *A brief comment on some scientific approaches*

The *Handbook* highlights the degree to which the study of emotion is strewn across the academy. Each contributor enunciates the intellectual space of their discipline for emotion theory, and one offers this helpful overview:

[I]n primacy of interest, disciplinary seemliness, and volume of empirical work, psychologists ‘own’ the topic of emotions. Yet, given the scope, span, and ramifications of emotion phenomena, many other disciplines are also legitimately concerned with affective life. Physiologists link emotions to anatomical structures and processes; anthropologists tie emotions to particular cultural logics and practices; historians trace emotions of today to emotions of the past; ethologists seek what is phylogenetically given as well as distinctively human in emotions; and sociologists examine how emotions are triggered, interpreted, and expressed by virtue of human membership in groups.¹⁰

A quick foray into the scientific quest for emotion (using the *Handbook* and some other sources¹¹) will repay us, by orienting us to some basic terms. We can then be more alert to the limitations of scientific ‘emotion’ for ethical enquiry.

Neuroscientific approaches observe regions deep within the brain that are the major neurological substrate for emotional processes. For Joseph LeDoux, emotional responses represent a kind of whole-brain ‘networking’;¹² while for Jaak Panksepp, there are certain domains, or ‘natural kinds’, of emotion that congregate around various parts of the brain.¹³ These parts are “necessary albeit not sufficient neural substrates for distinct types of emotional processes.”¹⁴ Their positions reflect a dispute over emotions as subsisting largely in neurologically localities (Panksepp), or largely in brain-wide systems (LeDoux). But Panksepp does not dispute the brain’s massive interconnection, from which one implication is clear.

Damage to the cortex only modulates the degree of emotionality, not the ability to have emotional feelings. In general, decorticate animals are just as emotional as, and perhaps more emotional than, normal ones. Clearly, what the cortex allows is ever more sophisticated ways for organisms to regulate their emotions—to extend and shorten emotional episodes in time, to focus

¹⁰ Theodore D. Kemper, “Social Models in the Explanation of Emotions,” in *Handbook of Emotions: Second Edition*, eds Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, (New York; London: Guilford Press, 2000), 45.

¹¹ Given the vastness of this literature, the other sources are necessary eclectic. Interested readers should note the extensive bibliography in each *Handbook* article.

¹² This material is summarised in Joseph E. LeDoux and Elizabeth A. Phelps, “Emotional Networks in the Brain,” in *Handbook of Emotions: Second Edition*, eds Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, (New York; London: Guilford Press, 2000); and at a more popular level, in Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than I.Q.* (London: Bloomsbury, 1996), 13-29; 297-300; 312-14; & 339 n.7.

¹³ Jaak Panksepp, “Emotions as Natural Kinds within the Mammalian Brain,” in *Handbook of Emotions: Second Edition*, eds Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, (New York; London: Guilford Press, 2000).

¹⁴ Jaak Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience: The Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), ix.

their emotional resources via learning, and in humans to parse basic emotional concepts in increasingly sophisticated ways.¹⁵

So, whatever is found out about the basic functioning of emotion (and however the dispute about neurological substrates is decided), the handling of emotion is returned to all who consider this “sophisticated” regulation and learning. This obviously includes all who have a functioning human brain, whether the non-specialist folk who navigate through life, or the philosophers, counsellors, psychologists or theologians who reflect further upon such things. Panksepp and LeDoux would not disagree—although for Panksepp, a robust debate is to be had against “ultrapositivistic” positions in neuroscience.¹⁶

The ‘ownership’ of emotion by psychology is better represented as a sprawling tussle that has continued for about a century among various competitors. Longstanding tensions between behavioural and cognitive approaches have generated a vast twentieth-century literature on emotion, with a range of disputes among proponents of the various views. This landscape is competently, if briefly, surveyed by William Lyons,¹⁷ who places those twentieth-century approaches against an older backdrop.

Lyons rightly observes the inestimable effect of Descartes upon modern psychology. “From the seventeenth century to roughly the end of the nineteenth century, the Cartesian theory was the orthodox theory.”¹⁸ While theologians criticise Descartes’ strong soul-body dualism (since there are other ways to conceive of a soul), psychologists and philosophers¹⁹ find against the private, ‘mentalist’ nature of Descartes’ ‘emotions’, which are ‘hidden’ in an immaterial soul.

William James sought to ring an important change upon Descartes, by shifting the locus of the emotion from the hiddenness of the soul, to the body’s actual physiological disturbances. Lyons cites the “core” of James’ theory (which, after being independently propounded by Carl Lange, came to be known as the James-Lange thesis):

*[B]odily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting fact, and ... our feeling of the same changes as they occur is the emotion. Common-sense says, we lose our fortune, are sorry and weep ... The hypothesis here to be defended says ... that we feel sorry because we cry.*²⁰

¹⁵ Panksepp, “Emotions,” 152.

¹⁶ Ibid., 141 & 340, where he outlines the respects in which LeDoux agrees.

¹⁷ William Lyons, *Emotion* (Aldershot: Gregg Revivals, 1993; originally published Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 1-52.

¹⁸ Ibid., 2.

¹⁹ Lyons cites Anthony Kenny, *Action, Emotion and Will* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), 13-16.

²⁰ Lyons, 13, citing William James (dated 1884).

It is only a short step to twentieth-century behaviourism, which was *only* interested in physiological changes, effectively forbidding reference to inner states (and thus *not* reckoning itself as Cartesian). The behaviourist interest exclusively in measuring physiological and behavioural responses reflected the positivist milieu, and behavioural psychology was at best agnostic, and at worst hostile, to the feelingful inner world of ‘folk psychology’.

However, behaviourism was unable satisfactorily to account for emotion in any sense. (Lyons recounts behaviourist J.B. Watson’s “shiningly honest”²¹ failure to do so.) This absence of an account, and a trenchant resistance against consideration of inner mental events, gave rise to attempts to shift blame for the failure to ‘emotion’ itself. “The ‘emotions’ are excellent examples of the fictional causes to which we commonly attribute behaviour”, declared eminent behaviourist B.F. Skinner;²² and “an attempt to define emotion is obviously misplaced and doomed to failure”.²³ This unrealistic scepticism, and the extreme unreality, of behaviourist approaches to emotion, led in turn to a “cognitive revolution” in psychology.²⁴

‘Cognitive’ theories of emotion have a very useful central feature that behaviourism could not offer, a feature best illustrated by a trivial example. Lately, my own life has involved much cycling, usually in the rain, covered in plastic clothing. When the run-off from my plastic trousers begins to soak my socks, I experience—what? Disgust? Annoyance? Anger? The actual name of the emotion, if helpful, is less important than the fact of it. What is easier follows: that I am one of these things, *because* my socks are wet, and at the prospect of a day’s reading with damp feet.

To speak about my emotions in this way is to understand the *cognitions* associated with them as integral to them, so generating a ‘cognitive’ theory of emotion. To speak of emotions as somehow being ‘cognitive’ may, or may not, be to smuggle ‘rationality’ into the centre of ‘emotion’, so displacing it, or feelingful elements of it. But it is at least simply to notice that very often, something about an ‘emotion’ is immediately and obviously ‘thinkable’ and articulable. My emotion is certainly ‘irrational’ insofar as directed, say, against the plastic trousers (which are, after all, keeping everything else dry). But its focus

²¹ Ibid., 19.

²² Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience*, 9; citing B.F. Skinner (dated 1953).

²³ Ibid., 25 n.14, citing behaviourist George Mandler.

²⁴ Ibid., 10.

upon the sock is completely ‘rational’ given the purpose of the sock, the good of the foot that wears it, and their relation to the day ahead for the owner of both.

That all this happens in a moment in no way detracts from its rationality. As Lyons sees it, “a cognitive theory of emotion is one that makes some aspect of thought, usually a belief, central to the concept of emotion and, at least in some cognitive theories, essential to distinguishing the different emotions from one another.”²⁵ Critics point to difficulties in ascribing judgments to those who know their emotion to be ‘irrational’—with, say, a phobia of insects, or an aggressive moment towards a wounding tin opener, or ongoing affection toward an abusive partner.²⁶ Nevertheless, the cognitivist claim that emotions often, or usually, have their own kind of logic is hard to refute. Again, as with the sock, the ‘irrational’ moment toward the tin opener reflects a profoundly rational moment toward the thumb; phobias might sometimes concern what ‘could happen’; and love for abusive partners might include (forlorn) hopes for what could be in a relationship.

For Robert C. Roberts, “a family of views” hold in common that “an emotion is an intrinsically intentional mental state” (against James’ nonintentional view) and that “an emotion’s object is constitutive of the emotion”.²⁷ Various nuanced descriptions emerge. Roberts describes emotions as “focused actualizations, episodic versions of ... prior dispositional concerns [or] perceptual instances of ... respective cares.”²⁸ They are, in his main catch-phrase, “concern-based construals”.²⁹

Of course, cognitive approaches can also be fallaciously reductive. “[W]hile emotions can be said to be unreasonable, unjustified or inappropriate, feelings cannot, therefore emotions are not feelings”.³⁰ This “therefore” forgets that equally possibly, emotions could both incorporate and *be more than* feeling. Moreover—and in implicit agreement, oddly, with behaviourism—the claim simply begs the question of whether bodily feelings are a genus of which emotional feelings are species. The claim trades upon feelings that are not emotions (such as itchiness), to make a claim against those that might be (such as sadness).

²⁵ Lyons, 33.

²⁶ Rosalind Hursthouse, “Virtue Ethics and the Emotions,” in *Virtue Ethics*, ed. Daniel Statman, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 109-10. Hursthouse names these as two critiques among many, and without necessarily agreeing with them.

²⁷ Robert C. Roberts, “Emotions Among the Virtues of the Christian Life,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 20 (1992): 48.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 39.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 48; based on Robert C. Roberts, “What an Emotion Is—a Sketch,” *Philosophical Review* 97 no. 2 (1988).

³⁰ Lyons, 8.

There is great variance among cognitive theories in the degree to which they admit emotions as ‘feelingful’. The matter is a storm-centre of dispute. Claim and counter-claim over the nature of ‘affect’, over various ‘feelings’ qualified or disqualified as emotions, and over various judgments qualified or disqualified as feelingful, become difficult to track. (In this respect, the Cartesian legacy seems still to be with us.) We will not deal directly with this debate, as trenchant rebuttals already exist against cognitive views where emotion is essentially feelingless.³¹ I am largely persuaded by these.

Emotions admit of a cognitive account, then. But clearly, discussion about cognitions is not restricted to the domain of psychology. We shall see Lyons and others open up this discussion.³² Also, cognitive accounts are like a pre-Cartesian classical tradition; and a kind of cognitive account will emerge from our theological investigation in Part Two.

Science, then, can help us understand various emotional phenomena. But there are fundamental differences in the interpretation of data, and scientists can tend to claim that their own field of study explains all of the others. This ‘balkanisation’ results from the complexity of the world—there are many ways to describe how things are. It derives also from a scientific insouciance toward any ‘final cause’ (which is to say, science is unconcerned about what things are finally *for*). Unconcern about final cause is an appropriate basis upon which to discover how things *are*, but can predispose pundits toward unwarranted assertions that nothing is finally *for* anything. The non-teleological nature of science makes scientific views of emotion particularly unhelpful to discover the relationship of emotion to ethics, since ethical concepts are intrinsically teleological.

The next subsection will expand upon this ‘balkanisation’, and the following subsection will draw out the ethical implications of an abrogated *telos*.

b) ‘Balkanisation’ among the sciences

‘Balkanisation’ is reflected in the *Handbook*, which includes contributions from all the fields listed by Kemper.³³ This scientific research—whether neuroscientific, psychological, or sociological—largely consists in observing others emote, and so the many perspectives of the *Handbook* include much that is intriguing and perceptive. However, given that the

³¹ David Pugmire, *Rediscovering Emotion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 104 & passim; Michael Stocker, *Valuing Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), xvii, xix, 17f., 25f., & passim; cf. Justin Oakley, *Morality and the Emotions* (London: Routledge, 1992) for a thorough survey and a similar position. Stocker’s mood is summed up in his quotation from anthropologist R. Shweder: “Three-year olds, Ifaluk islanders, and psychoanalysts (in other words, almost everyone, except perhaps the staunchest of positivists) recognize that emotions are *feelings*.” (Stocker, 17-18.)

³² See below, 31ff.

³³ See quotation above, 21.

same basic phenomena are under review, severe interpretative dissonance among the various approaches remains hard for the onlooker to fathom.

The irreducible core of Panksepp's position is that "basic emotions are 'natural kinds' that have specifiable neural substrates".³⁴ But fundamental to Nico Frijda's psychology is that "[e]motion' is not a natural class."³⁵ We wonder what the neuroscientists might make of this trenchant social constructivism: "Even the capacity of the mind to reflect and to rehearse alternative courses of action—that is, the ability to think—is socially given."³⁶ But this hardly represents an alliance between psychologists and sociologists, else one contributor would not need to plead that there is "little to be gained ... in characterizing entire socioemotional systems as *either* individual or social (collective) in orientation."³⁷ Similarly, data concerning facial expressions is bitterly contested.³⁸ Not only are they contested taxonomically (is each emotion 'discrete', or do they occur across a continuum?)—there is a more disturbingly basic disagreement over those who grimace. Do they do so over concerns unique to themselves and their communities, or over matters that can be regarded as generally intelligible? Into this discussion, cultural psychologists must insert that somehow, both are true.³⁹

These fundamental disputes go beyond mere data collection and interpretation. Some deeper malaise is evidently at work. This condition strongly resembles that "[f]ragmentation" of the sciences that is, for Oliver O'Donovan, "the hallmark of scientific knowledge itself, which has become balkanized into a multitude of 'sciences' laying conflicting claims upon the same territory of experience."⁴⁰ So for example Panksepp lays claim to the common territory of *emotional* experience when "a brain-systems analysis is finally providing a 'gold standard' for all other levels of theorizing."⁴¹ It is "a missing piece

³⁴ Panksepp, "Emotions," 137.

³⁵ Nico H. Frijda, "The Psychologists' Point of View," in *Handbook of Emotions: Second Edition*, eds Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, (New York; London: Guilford Press, 2000), 59.

³⁶ Kemper, 45.

³⁷ Geoffrey M. White, "Representing Emotional Meaning: Category, Metaphor, Schema, Discourse," in *Handbook of Emotions: Second Edition*, eds Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, (New York; London: Guilford Press, 2000), 43.

³⁸ Dacher Keltner and Paul Ekman, "Facial Expression of Emotion," in *Handbook of Emotions: Second Edition*, eds Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, (New York; London: Guilford Press, 2000).

³⁹ Richard A. Shweder and Jonathan Haidt, "The Cultural Psychology of the Emotions: Ancient and New," in *Handbook of Emotions: Second Edition*, eds Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, (New York; London: Guilford Press, 2000), 399-402.

⁴⁰ Oliver M.T. O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order: An Outline for Evangelical Ethics* (Leicester: Apollos, 1994), 50.

⁴¹ Panksepp, "Emotions," 47.

that can bring ... together” the disciplines of ethology, behaviourism, cognitive science, sociobiology, evolutionary psychology, clinical psychology, psychiatry, and philosophy.⁴² His ‘affective neuroscience’ is a “cornerstone” to “heal and solidify psychology as a unified discipline.”⁴³

Panksepp is quite interested in interdisciplinary co-operation. But when science is ‘balkanized’ in this way, there follows within each science the supposition “that the key which it carries ... will fit every door”.⁴⁴ O’Donovan is dubious toward such hegemonic claims, and the various hegemonic disputes of the *Handbook* arm us with ample reason to agree with him. We will do well to note his explanation for the malaise.

The logic of science requires the provisional disuse of traditional teleology, to help goad thought toward the perception of new generic relations. Science then proceeds by its discernment of various patterns within the universe’s generic order. Such is the complexity of this order that various helpful descriptions of it are conveyed through the various scientific disciplines.⁴⁵ Thus in psychology, for example, ‘emotion’ begins as an uncontroversial descriptive tool—a marker for some behaviours and experiences, described apart from teleology.

But in modern science, the provisional disuse of traditional teleology often hardens into an *ontological denial* of all teleological order. This becomes the Achilles’ heel for its final claim to truth, for “[k]nowledge of the world without ends can never become unified knowledge.”⁴⁶ And since no discussion of *ethics* can avoid a conception of ends, we can now comprehend the striking absence of any sustained ethical reflection in the *Handbook of Emotions*.

c) *Ethical implications of abrogated telos*

It is obvious to many of the *Handbook’s* contributors that ethics is somehow related to emotion. “The moral work done by emotion language is reflected in the preponderance of negative terms in emotion lexicons across cultures.”⁴⁷ But despite the recurrence in many papers of terms such as lust, jealousy, guilt, shame, and contempt, little effort is made to

⁴² Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience*, 5.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴⁴ O’Donovan, 50, quoting Karl Rahner.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁴⁷ White, 40.

unravel the nature of this moral 'work'. *Prima facie*, this would seem to evidence generic relations run amok. After rescuing emotion from its effluvial status, ethics becomes the unsayable detritus instead. When science insists that emotion (like everything else) is ontologically non-teleological, the scientific account of emotion cannot meaningfully be joined to ethics. Having begun by suspecting the importance of emotion for a proper understanding of ethics, we now begin to suspect the importance of *ethics* for a proper understanding of *emotion*.

These difficulties should remind us of MacIntyre's apocalyptic vision of ethics itself, where our reflections occur within the chaotic ruin of moral visions long since abandoned.⁴⁸ In this bleak view, piecemeal appropriations from systems that made sense in their time now contradict other such borrowings, although reasons for each contradiction seem opaque. For MacIntyre,

the abandonment of any notion of a *telos* leaves behind a moral scheme composed of two remaining elements whose relationship becomes quite unclear. There is on the one hand a certain content for morality: a set of injunctions deprived of their teleological context. There is on the other hand a certain view of untutored-human-nature-as-it-is.⁴⁹

MacIntyre seeks to reinstate such a *telos*,⁵⁰ so that evaluative claims can function again as a particular type of factual claim.⁵¹ For MacIntyre, overtly teleological evaluative claims make plausible the justification of particular policies, actions and judgments, and build toward a moral theory and practise that includes 'objective' standards. But within the theoretical vacuum of lost *telos*, ethics can only be secured by ethical emotivism. Historically, emotivist theories are a last resort, when no other basis can be agreed upon, and where the emotional component is a residual reminder of older, teleologically oriented evaluations.⁵² The appearance of emotivist theories represents a malfunction in the nature of evaluation itself, an unravelling of 'evaluation' *per se*, so that it becomes possible to see it as a project *either* emotive *or* ratiocinative.

As this thesis proceeds, we shall see how an 'evaluation' was once constituted *as much by* its affective tones as by its rational overtones. The post-enlightenment split between fact and value will prove largely to *consist* in the distillation of something called 'emotion' from

⁴⁸ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 1-22 & passim.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 127, 158, 184 & passim. This first attempt is along Aristotelian lines, in response to Miss Anscombe's challenge; but MacIntyre will later argue for an overtly Thomist *telos*. (See below, 244-246.)

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 18-19. A similar conclusion is drawn elsewhere concerning the situation in which eighteenth century moral sense theorists found themselves. (See Paul McReynolds on Hutcheson, below, 49.)

something called 'reason'. Science, once the junior partner in this unravelling, has now become the enforcer. For it will admit of no ends for emotion.

d) The need for a broader canvas

It is interesting to see just how ambitious is Charles Stevenson's emotivism, which attempted to account for ethics within the bounds of scientific epistemology. Contra caricature, he does not deride ethics or emotion: both are highly valued, and he strains to retain both from within the strange givens of the positivist self. This much is to his credit.

But his strategy and suppositions are deeply wanting. Ethics and emotion are hermetically sealed off from 'beliefs' or 'cognitions', in a kind of capsule called 'attitude', where 'approval' or 'disapproval' happens. (Stevenson would not endorse my 'capsule' metaphor, since we are asked not to hypostasise what is meant only as a theory of language use.) However, what begins as a straightforward difference (between belief and attitude) becomes a highly complicated clinch. When beliefs about facts impinge upon attitude, a kind of miracle happens: approvals change. (I say 'miracle' because unfortunately, 'cognition' and 'attitude' admit of no real definition other than by usage, which Stevenson acknowledges is "not an agreeable admission".⁵³ They are related tentatively by "continual interplay",⁵⁴ where beliefs are somehow "intermediaries"⁵⁵ between one attitude and another. "But however this may be, we must forego any further analysis of this type".⁵⁶) The legitimate work of normative moral philosophy is exhaustively to offer ever radiating networks of causality, drawn in detail from *every* science, to affect attitudes toward "focal aims",⁵⁷ even though after this "formidable" task,⁵⁸ "[a]greement in attitude may not arise, even if agreement in belief is secured."⁵⁹

Of course the mistake was to leave the positivist self unquestioned: the overall impression is of a project doomed by the lack of necessary resources. By the final paragraph of *Ethics and Language*, the major premise lies undone. "The demand for a final proof springs less from hopes than from fears",⁶⁰ the paragraph begins, alluding to a prior comment about the

⁵³ Stevenson, 67.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 71.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 115.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 329-30.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 329.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 332.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 336, as for quotations following.

‘consolations’ of deontology. “When the basic nature of a subject is poorly understood, one must conceal his insecurity, from himself as much as from others, by consoling pretenses.” But this is to admit, both in the ‘poor understanding’ and the ‘consoling pretences’, of a cognitive strand to emotion—precisely the kind of thing has been hermetically sealed *out of* the ‘capsule’ of emotive approval. Whatever purpose has been served in the distinction between a belief and an attitude is now entirely overthrown, if it hasn’t been already by the inseparable clinch between giving reasons and persuading. The best account all along has been that emotions and reasons are deeply intertwined. “There need be only that temper of mind which, abiding firmly by the conclusions that seem at the time most trustworthy, is still sensitive to the fact that living questions are too rich in their complexity to be answered by a formula.” This final sentence of *Ethics and Language* would seem to exemplify precisely the *inability* to refrain from unwarranted conclusions that, for Charles Taylor, typifies modern ‘ethics of inarticulacy’ which hide their fundamental goods.⁶¹ We certainly need some kind of broader canvas, some wider terms of reference than science is usually prepared to allow.

The editors of the *Handbook* are somewhat aware of this, given their inclusion of philosophy, historical emotionology and cultural-psychology among the other largely scientific approaches. But to what kind of ‘non-scientific’ approaches should something like the *Handbook* attend? A debate could be had with them here. The editors do go beyond the bounds of science, but they privilege a few particular complementary approaches over other non-scientific accounts, and then underprivilege their whole class of account by making these alternative accounts to be so few.

What follows in this thesis could be thought of as a reply to their restraint. In this chapter, we shall go on to examine three thinkers—William Lyons, Robert C. Solomon, and Martha C. Nussbaum—who include more in their accounts of emotion than scientific terms of reference allow. The first will insist that a scientist’s data on emotion can make no sense apart from the subject’s report of their *evaluations*; the second contrasts the scientist’s concern over the “technology of experience”⁶² with his own interest in the “politics of experience”; and the third looks to a hybridised Aristotelian-Nietzschean account of love to sustain ethics. These are spokespersons for a more ‘unified theory’ of emotion—one which takes seriously the fragmentation we have seen, and which seeks to mend it with some

⁶¹ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 84 & 53-90 passim.

⁶² Robert C. Solomon, *The Passions: Emotions and the Meaning of Life (Second Edition)* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993), 125; see below, 36.

decisions in favour of a kind of *telos*. These accounts will lead inexorably into ethical terrain, sometimes intentionally, sometimes unwittingly.

3. Lyon's 'causal-evaluations'

We have seen the need for a broader canvas than science supplies. I will now show that William Lyons, a scientifically oriented thinker, would agree, since he is able to take seriously the way that *evaluations* are central to emotions, and emotions help to *cause* behaviours. The implication of this is, again, that ethical understanding is required for proper emotional understanding. Lyons also realises that his theory cannot explain everything he sees.

After outlining the 'classic' theories of psychology, Lyons offers his own "causal-evaluative" theory of emotion.⁶³ It is of considerable interest for ethics, and represents a significant departure from the disputes of psychology, though remaining firmly in that fold. He expounds the view in a series of six propositions (where the second is easily the most central). Their painstaking manner is necessitated by the sometimes strange views with which he is in dialogue. The propositions are as follows:

1. *Specific occurrences* of emotion are the **paradigmatic unit** of consideration (rather than emotions as dispositionally considered). Dispositions are logically founded upon whatever we make of these specific occurrences.
2. These occurrences involve an *evaluation* that brings about significant *physiological change*. (Although he calls these changes "abnormal", he means by this "unusual"⁶⁴ or 'out of the ordinary'.) These two facets of an emotion are **necessarily constitutive to it**; and the evaluations usually have a 'personal twist'—that is, they relate specifically to the person doing the evaluating. *That an evaluation is involved delineates emotional experiences from other physiological experiences. That a physiological change is involved delineates emotional thought from other forms of thought.*⁶⁵

⁶³ Lyons, 52-69.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 60.

⁶⁵ Perhaps we should clarify that the 'physiological change' might only be 'measurable' to the person concerned, even if not to the psychologist or onlooker, and that such 'measurements' are a part of what people report as their 'feelings'. We can agree with at least this aspect of the James-Lange thesis: that when people register certain physiological changes within themselves, they know these 'feelings' to constitute some aspect of their 'emotions'. Obviously, only a (behavioural) psychologist's hubris would require that psychologists must also register them before they are bona-fide. But against James-Lange, people are not fooled into thinking they have an emotion on the basis of these feelings; rather, they causally correlate these feelings with given emotions. This is not to deny that people sometimes self-deceive or are emotionally unaware. (Cf. *ibid.*, 115-155.)

3. It is by their *different evaluative aspects* that **different emotions** are discerned. That is, while a similar set of physiological (and even behavioural) changes might seem to be involved, these might relate to quite different emotions, depending on whatever evaluations the person is making at that time. His refreshingly clear illustration is worth quoting at length:

Let me show that it does work, that the evaluative factor does differentiate the emotions, by means of an example. I am standing talking with a man at a party when a third person, a woman, joins us. The man gets edgy, shifts from foot to foot, fidgets with his glass ... and is suddenly much brusquer in manner and tone of voice. He doesn't reveal in his conversation or expression what is upsetting him, except that it is associated with the woman's suddenly joining us. It could be that he hates the woman, or is in love with her, or is angry with her, or afraid of her, or embarrassed. I cannot tell what emotion he is undergoing till I work out how he sees, that is, evaluates, the situation. If, afterwards, I learn that she was his ex- wife, I'm still not much the wiser. But if I learn that he believes that she betrayed him to the Gestapo during the war, I would be fairly safe in assuming that he probably despises her utterly and so his emotion is hate. If I learn, on the other hand, that he believed that she was going to reveal that he had stolen the silver, then his emotion was most probably fear because he probably believed that he would be publicly shamed. If I learn, however, that she has just rejected his offer of marriage, then I would guess that his emotion was embarrassment, as he probably considered the situation to be very awkward.

The point is that, to work out what emotion is in question, I seek clues as to what is this person's view of the situation, that is, how he evaluates it. Behaviour, facial expressions, gestures, words, the interplay of persons in a group, may all function as clues to differentiating the emotions, yet they are not themselves the differentiator. They are clues to how the subject of an emotion evaluates his situation, and this is the differentiator proper. When we jump straight from observing behaviour or gestures or facial expressions to concluding that such and such an emotion is in question, it can only be because the behaviour or gesture or expression is typically the manifestation—the deliberate sign or ... symptom—of some evaluative attitude.⁶⁶

4. Some (but not all) emotional states may be constituted by certain *desires* along with the evaluation and physiological state. It does not follow from this that these emotions should be given over to behaviourism, as if the person who felt fear but acted bravely is therefore to be considered unafraid.
5. The central evaluative aspect brings about *emotional behaviour* through a **rational, and causal, link with desire**. Behaviour arises, rationally and causally, from the evaluative aspect via desire.⁶⁷ That is, while feelings do not of themselves provide good reasons for action, evaluations do. Desires pursuant to evaluations will then promote various behaviours. Thus responses to three different 'fear' situations—of dogs, of getting fat, of being found out—are handled well by a causal-evaluative theory: I will erect a fence,

⁶⁶ Lyons, 62-63.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 92-98.

or stop eating, or go to America due to differing *evaluative* and *appetitive* aspects of my ‘fear’, as required by the different circumstances. Against this, behaviourist theories could make no sense of the very different behaviours that arise from ‘fear’.

6. By making *evaluations central* in this way, it does **not** follow that emotions are **intangible and non-objective**. Lyons hopes this point can be defended (again against behaviourism, it seems) by the kind of neuroscientific study that observes emotional activity in the working brain. (This field of study was unavailable to him at his time of writing.)

Qualifications in the fourth and sixth propositions reflect the degree to which behaviourist readers needed assistance. His first stipulation deflects debate over where an ‘emotion’ might merge into a ‘mood’. Likewise, he is interested to assert that emotions are essentially feelingful, but without becoming bogged down in boring debates over feeling. The sixth point, although difficult, gives prominence to desire while rendering it intelligible within the wider context of evaluation toward ends.

As we shall see, the entire theory bears strong resemblance to that of Aquinas (with whom Lyons is sympathetically familiar, though understanding his own theory to differ in key aspects). But as interesting as his six propositions are, there are points where Lyons withholds comment, as is appropriate when the logic is inductively empirical.

Why ... should one ever suggest that an evaluation is the cause of the physiological change? ... It is quite simply a matter of the evaluation being the best claimant in the circumstances for being the cause of the observed physiological effects.

I do not think it is a weakness ... that I cannot give an account of *how* an evaluation can cause physiological changes.⁶⁸

The price Lyons is willing to pay toward his causal-evaluative theory, is the implicit inclusion of *telos*—embedded in his notion of *evaluation*. Consider also this interesting, tantalising qualification:

Considered epistemologically, evaluations are not really cognitive at all. Etymologically, ‘cognitive’, from Latin *cognoscere*, implies perception, knowledge or, in general, becoming acquainted with. But to evaluate is not to gain knowledge but to relate something already known or perceived to some rating scale. In the context of certain emotions, such as love, for example, this scale seems to be of a very personal and subjective sort, for what is loveable is very much in the eye or mind of the lover. With other emotions, such as fear, the scale will turn out to be reasonably objective, for what is rated as dangerous is more or less what it is or has been shown to be in the past. Yet even here the rating of the perceived situation as dangerous is done with a personal twist. The situation is seen in relation to me, as primarily one which is threatening to me (or those close to me), where I am the final arbiter of

⁶⁸ Ibid., 61-62.

whether it is really threatening or not. Hence a good proportion of fears are rated by others as phobias.⁶⁹

In the climate of current literature, his straightforward and conversational style will seem unguarded. “Rating scale”, “subjective”, “objective”, “close to me” will elicit a groan from whoever prejudices ethics as beyond fit terms of reference. But Lyons has penetrated to something of great significance, which lends his theory explanatory force: that emotional evaluations are not merely in the business of seizing upon various particulars or specific objects—rather, intrinsic to them is a matter of discerning the *relationships* between things. The ethical task is, in part, about looking upon a sprawling ‘moral field’ constituted by various relationships, somehow to discern how to act among those relationships. If emotions are to be understood along lines at all similar to Lyons’ causal-evaluative theory, then they are at the very heart of such an ethical task. This in turn coheres with the irreducibly ethical nature of such terms as “rating scale”, “close to me” and ‘evaluation’.

(Such a ‘moral field’ is integral to the thesis of O’Donovan’s *Resurrection*. The moral field is real and we are each situated in it both as an agent and as a constitutive element. The field is a unified set of pluralities, thus ‘pluriform’; and the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the paramount Christian distinctive in the epistemology of discernment. I will utilise this concept frequently.)

What we have, then, is a theory of emotion, which emphasises an agent’s *telos* and her engagement in a moral field. The theory also has an overt break in continuity. Lyons knows what he sees in emotion, and knows what he cannot explain there. But this does not discredit what he thinks he sees.

4. Solomon’s ‘politics of experience’

In this section, I will examine Robert C. Solomon’s account of emotion, where each emotion is a ‘constitutive judgment’. His account seeks to defend subjectivity, by mending what he takes to be a vice in Western thought: the rift between reason and emotion. I will show how this account morally orders emotion around whatever is required for an agent’s ‘self esteem’, and that a tension exists between this ordering and Solomon’s interest in ‘intersubjectivity’ between people. Augustine is singled out for disagreement(s), as an exponent of a Christian account.

Our tentative proposal above to construe emotion as ‘that which moves us’⁷⁰ came from Solomon, who uses ‘passion’ as a “generic term to cover the entire range of those

⁶⁹ Ibid., 59-60.

⁷⁰ See above, 11.

phenomena (a neutral word for the moment) that may be said to ‘move’ us.”⁷¹ Central to Solomon’s career-long philosophical interest in emotion is his sustained and forceful attempt to reintegrate ‘passion’ and ‘reason’. The recent re-release of his main work on emotion reaffirms a thesis first presented three decades ago.⁷²

“It is the web of our emotions that defines human subjectivity.”⁷³ Solomon seeks “to return to the passions the central and defining roles in our lives that they have so long and persistently been denied,” and also seeks “to limit the pretensions of ‘objectivity’ and self-demeaning reason which have exclusively ruled Western philosophy, religion, and science since the days of Socrates.”⁷⁴ On his view, ratiocination is the approved thought-form of Western philosophy, lauding reason as antithetical to passion’s ‘brutality’. But this demeans the self, for passions “are not those primitive ragamuffins and the refuse of our psychic life that Western rationalism has always warned us against with thinly veiled repulsion; they are the high court of consciousness, to which all else, even reason, must pay tribute.”⁷⁵

Emotions are ‘intentional’, and each emotion essentially has a logical connection with its object, which is something in the world “experienced through our concerns and values”.⁷⁶ The object as conceived by the emotion has no existence apart from the emotion, just as an emotion is inseparable from its object.⁷⁷ Thus emotions are “the defining *structures* of our existence ... *identical* to the intellectual structures.”⁷⁸ He argues for “a kind of ‘hardheaded Romanticism’”⁷⁹—a new, “rational Romanticism” where emotions are themselves “the source of most of our values”, and “are responsible for” reality (rather than a source of its distortion). On this view an emotion cannot be said to be resultant upon a judgment; rather, it *is* the judgment.⁸⁰ These judgments are self-involved, relatively intense evaluations of the

⁷¹ Solomon, *Passions*, 68. ‘Passion’ includes emotions, moods, and desires (70).

⁷² Ibid., passim.

⁷³ Ibid., 71.

⁷⁴ Ibid., xiv.

⁷⁵ Ibid., xvii.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 116.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 118.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 5.

⁷⁹ Ibid., xxi.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 126-7. Some evaluative judgments are not necessarily emotions. Solomon offers *arbitration* as an example.

personal significance of their object. “An emotion is a (set of) judgment(s) which constitute our world, our surreality”.⁸¹

Solomon is unsurprised if his account sounds odd to Westerners, since they are steeped in a ‘Myth of the Passions’. The myth entails a false antithesis, where reason and emotion are in conflict, with reason controlling a horde of suspect emotions. Solomon sets his face against almost all Western thought, since the ‘myth’ is evident in a startlingly long list of Western thinkers. (He is especially unimpressed by Kant.)⁸² Psychological sciences are also compromised by their adherence to this ‘myth’;⁸³ and even neurological accounts become suspect when neurological causes of an emotion are used to constitute an ethical “excuse system” (since on Solomon’s view, emotions themselves attract praise or blame).⁸⁴

Solomon believes his defence of subjectivity to be a different interest than that pursued by neurobiologists and psychologists:

One might say that their interest, not ours, is the ‘technology of the experience,’ the discovery of techniques and instruments to alter our consciousness ‘from the outside.’ As a philosopher, however, I am only interested in what R.D. Laing has called the ‘politics of experience,’ changing oneself from within. The strategies of politics and ideology are persuasion, changing the object of passion rather than the cause. ... [I]t is only self-overcoming that interests me here. ... [T]o change oneself is to *grow*.⁸⁵

And this is the key point for what follows. Solomon believes his new understanding makes it possible to work toward *personal change*. In this ‘politics of experience’, Solomon outlines an ethical vision.

Since reason and passion *constitute* the world, passions can in themselves be morally sound or unsound; and they can be altered. “The unexamined passion may not be worth having; a passion examined must *earn* its place in our personality.”⁸⁶ Solomon repeatedly opposes conceptions of emotion that place emotions beyond the range of each agent’s responsibilities.⁸⁷ Rather, he finds the intricate relationship between emotion and ethics to be

⁸¹ Ibid., 126.

⁸² Ibid., 10; cf. *ibid.*, 11-12, for a useful ‘manifesto’ of Solomon’s view.

⁸³ Ibid., 91-97.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 94.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 125.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 8 & *passim*.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 87; cf. 25, 94, 109.

perfectly obvious. We should ask of an emotion “not ‘What *causes* me to feel this?’ but always ‘What *reason* do I have for *doing* this?’”⁸⁸

Our emotions are not only projections; they are our *projects*. They are not only directed towards intentional objects; they are laden with *intentions to act*. Emotions are concerned not only with ‘the way the world is’ but with the way it *ought* to be. Every emotion, in other words, is also a personal ideology, a projection into the future, and a system of hopes and desires, expectations and commitments, intentions and strategies for changing our world.⁸⁹

Even social ethics might feel the impact, were Solomon’s account widely accepted:

It is not capitalism that teaches greed and alienation; it is our greedy and alienated conceptions of ourselves that lay the foundation for capitalist ideology. We must change ourselves before we change society; and we must understand ourselves in order to change.⁹⁰

Thus ‘the meaning of life’, which *is* found in “the supposedly subphilosophical swamps of our passions”,⁹¹ naturally involves other people. “[T]he passions are precisely those structures which commit us and bind us to other people” for “nearly all ... of our emotions *essentially* include other people, not only as their objects but as a contributing source of their values and as shared subjects in what is called *intersubjectivity*.”⁹²

At first, it would seem that this is what makes Solomon’s account significant for ethics. The passions are not regarded as antisocial, selfish or self-indulgent as such;⁹³ however, they can be ‘childish’ and so morally culpable, and are the result of specific choice by the subject. “Reason makes contact with human values only through the passions.”⁹⁴ In Solomon’s ‘rational Romanticism’, responsibility of each agent for her own passions is heavily emphasised, and ‘wisdom’ becomes “a matter of living both thoughtfully and passionately”.⁹⁵

But his seemingly odd examples of thoughtful, passionate living include the drunkenness of Socrates, T.E. Lawrence’s “self-inflicted hardship and torture”, and Goethe’s promiscuity. Such lives are straightforwardly exemplary for him, with no oddness, since reason’s task is

⁸⁸ Ibid., 108-9.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 153.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 9.

⁹¹ Ibid., 24.

⁹² Ibid., 20.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 58.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 65, including next two quotations.

“nothing other than the selection and encouragement of what Nietzsche called the ‘life-enhancing passions’—the maximization of personal dignity and self-esteem.”

For a philosopher, this “nothing other” surely deserves closer attention. But the equation of ‘life-enhancing’ with ‘personal dignity and self-esteem’ is of greater interest here. After this sudden appearance, ‘self-esteem’ repeatedly reappears as the ordering principal. This unsubstantiated assertion, and the meaning of the term itself, also deserve closer scrutiny than he gives. But we can still be more pointed: if Solomon orders the usefulness of a passion around this maxim, it remains to be seen how it is exemplified in drunkenness, self-‘torture’ and promiscuity, and how the easy use of ‘life-enhancing’ applies to them.

In addition, the pro-social ethical tone is now displaced, and a tension exists between two ordering principles for emotion. Self-esteem ethically orders emotion; yet at the same time, emotions reflect an intersubjectivity between persons. The tension is evident elsewhere. “[T]he Self is an essential pole of emotional judgment, the standpoint from which our judgments of the world and other people begin”—so most emotions both involve other people, and evaluate a relationship.⁹⁶ Yet his next sentence repeats the self-esteem principle:

The ultimate object of our emotional judgment is always our own sense of personal dignity and self-esteem. Whatever its particular project and strategy, whether it is committed to collecting butterflies or to ruling Asia, an emotion is ultimately concerned with personal status, self-respect, and one’s place in his or her world. Insofar as an emotion is ‘about’ another person, as in love or hate, anger or pity, it is the constitution of an intersubjective identity, a relationship of one sort or another, perhaps competition or comparison, within which one attempts to elevate his self-esteem.⁹⁷

Again, there are unsubstantiated assertions here worth questioning. But more important is that Solomon has moved from an obvious and largely epistemological point—that “the Self is an essential pole of emotional judgment”—to *a moral ordering of emotion* based upon the same point. At a stroke, Solomon’s interesting and insightful “subjective theory of the emotions” becomes *an egoistic, if not a solipsistic, morality of emotion*. Despite Solomon’s explicit denial of solipsism,⁹⁸ his uncritical acceptance of Oscar Wilde’s “[a]nything worth doing is worth doing to excess”⁹⁹ points to such a trend. ‘Reality’ is only discussed in two aspects: firstly, insofar as it impinges upon the agent’s internal ‘Surreality’—an inner world mediated by constitutively-judging emotions; and secondly, insofar as emotionally derived intentions commit the agent to courses of action that alter ‘Reality’ (and thus the agent’s

⁹⁶ Ibid., 128-9.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 129.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 135.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 66.

own ‘Surreality’). We are left to ourselves in determining ethical implications of intersubjectivity.

Given this tension between self-esteem and intersubjectivity, and given also the trend to order emotion egoistically, it therefore becomes quite unclear which emotions an agent should settle on, let alone what criteria of judgment should be employed to settle upon them. In bewilderment, we might ask—whence cometh order? Indeed, how might we ever fight free from any mass-consciousness we are immersed in? Solomon sermonises upon this:

The fact that our emotional surrealities are so tediously similar and often degrading and our projections so uniformly defensive speaks to the fact that we have, because of the reflective myths (in the derogatory sense) in which our emotions have been couched, taken poor advantage of our most powerful and most personal instruments for making our lives meaningful—our emotions.¹⁰⁰

Pelagius held that the laws of God are enough straightforwardly to guide us into good behaviour. It seems that for Solomon, the emotions can do this. Our emotions can themselves surmount any false mass-consciousness in which those same emotions “have been couched”. What began as a promising and insightful analysis certainly seems to be wallowing.

Throughout his work, Nietzsche is the only Western thinker in whom Solomon finds a satisfying relation between passion and reason. Warmly quoting Nietzsche throughout, he finds shafts of insight in that thinker’s iconoclastic, passionate polemic against the diminution of passion. Nietzsche’s passions are variegated: some are ‘life-enhancing’, others ‘life-stultifying’, and each “has its quantum of reason”. Reason is best used to distinguish between passions rather than to react to them as a class.¹⁰¹

Nietzsche is basic to Solomon’s defence of subjectivity and his egoistic ordering of emotion. As this thesis progresses, it will become clear that Solomon also draws upon Aristotle for a social ethic based in intersubjectivity; and that he does not show how deliberation might proceed when this social approach conflicts with Nietzschean order of self-esteem.

Nietzsche’s assessment, that Christianity is in mood a ‘destroyer’ of the passions, also elicits Solomon’s broad agreement.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 152.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 65.

In most of Christianity the passions in general were denied even a subservient place; they were distractions from belief, ‘temptations of the flesh’, spurs to Sin. Certain selected passions survived, of course—faith, naturally, and a peculiarly emaciated and universally expanded notion of ‘love’. Augustine, for example, summarizes the case in his *Confessions*: “Thou hast created us for thyself, and our heart cannot be quieted till it may find repose in Thee.” Fifteen hundred years later, Nietzsche sarcastically recapitulated: “Thus it is ever, only the emasculated man is the good man”.¹⁰²

But Christian theology is not necessarily indicted by this quotation from Augustine. As this thesis proceeds, I will show that Solomon misunderstands the deep emotional literacy of Augustine’s theology.

5. Nussbaum’s ‘ascent’ of love

A related theory, but an altogether different approach, is found in Martha C. Nussbaum’s far-reaching amalgam of literary, philosophical, religious, legal, and cross-cultural interests. I will now examine Nussbaum’s ‘ascent of love’, a series of historical ‘discoveries’ about love that bring love into harmony with general social aims, making love basic to a ‘universalist’ ethic. She also singles out Augustine for disagreement, but is more sympathetic to him in some aspects than is Solomon.

Nussbaum, whose “ethical intuitions lie powerfully with Aristotle”,¹⁰³ ranges across these fields to find centrally human “grounding experiences”¹⁰⁴ of human need and capability, and a “universalist” liberal ethic based upon them, to inform her proposals for judicial and developmental ethics around the world. But the “single human question[s]” that are put, as it were, by these “grounding experiences”, generate “rival human answers” in the various traditions of thought. Clearly then, “religious and metaphysical difference” is the main threat to “derail this [universalist] enterprise”.

She is aware that her “allegedly universal account of the good is less neutral than some liberal theories of justice would wish.” She is also aware that “grounding experiences” as conceived by her are open to cultural prejudice. But she nonetheless pursues this universalist ethic unapologetically, and her sympathies are with the causes of women, and with the acceptance of bodily sexual expressions of adult love—and she will frankly oppose any traditional culture that might hinder the advance of these concerns. She also seeks for expressions of public mercy and compassion,¹⁰⁵ and is hostile to forms of thought that create

¹⁰² Ibid., 10.

¹⁰³ Martha C. Nussbaum, “Comparing Virtues,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 21 no. 2 (1993): 364.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 353-55, for this and quotations following.

¹⁰⁵ Martha C. Nussbaum, “Equity and Mercy,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 22 no. 2 (1993).

and exclude classes of outsider.¹⁰⁶ The importance of emotion within such a normative ethic, is immediately apparent.

But outlining this ethical standpoint in advance risks obscuring her method—an “ethical criticism of literature”¹⁰⁷—an approach to texts in an Aristotelian mood, as it were, to exhume emotions, ethics, and virtues from key texts in philosophy and literature, toward the synthesis of the ‘universalist’ ethic. Thus the main body of her work consists in expositions of texts ancient and modern—which are, in turn, measured and judged against the increasingly defined normative ethic. (At best this is a kind of recursive process; at worst, it is a globally hegemonic absorption of the texts. We would be best to reserve judgment for the moment.)

Her *Therapy of Desire* begins with Aristotle, Epicurius, Lucretius and the Stoics to show Hellenistic philosophy’s combination of logic and compassion, alongside “its advocacy of various types of detachment and freedom from disturbance.”¹⁰⁸ The Stoics understood emotions to be judgments concerning the uncontrollable, and the Stoic quest for *apatheia* represented a strategy to decrease emotion by re-evaluating external things, and lessening any attachment to them.¹⁰⁹ This Stoic problematic has elicited repeated engagements—both for it and against it—in the Western tradition.¹¹⁰ But it stands in contrast to an alternative view, originating with Aristotle, where human flourishing and the good life are constituted *within* the world and not *beyond* it, *within* the everyday activities of daily human life.¹¹¹

Nussbaum’s most major contribution appears in a volume published near the end of my own time of writing,¹¹² so I will outline her thesis using previously published material.¹¹³ She

¹⁰⁶ E.g. Martha C. Nussbaum, “*Wuthering Heights*: The Romantic Ascent,” *Philosophy and Literature* 20 no. 2 (1996): 366, 372, 375, 377. Cf. Martha C. Nussbaum, “Objectification,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 24 no. 4 (1995), where she analyses ‘objectification’ to find which versions of it actually seem respectful, given that other versions are reprehensible.

¹⁰⁷ See Nussbaum, “Objectification,” 255 for a brief description of it.

¹⁰⁸ Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Princeton, N.J.; Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1994), 9.

¹⁰⁹ Martha C. Nussbaum, “Morality and Emotions,” in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig. 10 vols., vol. 6 (London: Routledge, 1998), 558, 560; Martha C. Nussbaum, “Emotions as Judgements of Value and Importance,” in *Relativism, Suffering and Beyond*, eds Purusottama Bilimoria and Jitendra N. Mohanty, (Oxford; Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 234; cf. Nussbaum, *Therapy*.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Nussbaum, “Morality and Emotions,” 560-62, where this is the central organising thesis.

¹¹¹ Nussbaum, “Comparing,” 364-65; cf. Nussbaum, *Therapy*, 363, and Martha C. Nussbaum, “The Transfiguration of Everyday Life,” *Metaphilosophy* 25 no. 4 (1994): 238-39 & 259-60.

¹¹² Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

¹¹³ This includes Nussbaum, “Emotions as Judgements,” an early version of chapter 1; Martha C. Nussbaum, “The Ascent of Love—Plato, Spinoza, Proust,” *New Literary History* 25 no. 4 (1994), for chapter 10; Martha C.

openly aligns herself with cognitivist theorists of emotion, including Kenny, Lyons and Solomon,¹¹⁴ their conclusions forming her point of departure. Emotions are highly discriminating responses to matters of value and importance, especially represented in matters over which we feel we have little control. “Emotions are ... acknowledgements of neediness and lack of self-sufficiency”, and will become apparent toward some *valuable object*, in a seeing that has *intentions* towards the object, and that is threaded with (often complex) *beliefs*.¹¹⁵ (The similarity to Lyons and Solomon is clear.) She is wholly in favour of this aspect of Stoic analysis, against twentieth century behaviourism.¹¹⁶

For Nussbaum, Hellenistic thinkers knew too well the “depredations of emotion in politics”.¹¹⁷ But even so, no ethical theory—including theories of politics, law or public policy—can be called adequate in the absence of an adequate theory of emotion. Therefore she explores cultural sources, and childhood histories, of various emotions. Compassion and love then come under special scrutiny as necessarily integral to public life, despite movements to extirpate these from public decision-making. (Thus against legal retributivism and judicial behaviourism, she will picture a kind of merciful judge who is like the reader of a novel—emotionally involved in the web of circumstance governing each character, but personally neutral.¹¹⁸)

This brings Nussbaum to the most innovative part of her thesis, where she “attempts to imagine a reform or ascent of love, one that will render love more harmonious with general social aims.”¹¹⁹ Various forms of love, as reflected in a series of appreciations on various texts, are held aloft to discover how each might expand a proper vision of love.¹²⁰ The broad course she traces is of love as conceived through contemplative, Christian, Romantic, and

Nussbaum, “Augustine and Dante on the Ascent of Love,” in *The Augustinian Tradition*, ed. Gareth B. Matthews, (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1999), for chapters 11; Martha C. Nussbaum, “Beatrice’s Dante: Loving the Individual?,” *Apeiron* 26 no. 3-4 (1993), for chapter 12; Nussbaum, “*Wuthering Heights*,” for chapter 13; and Nussbaum, “Transfiguration Everyday,” for chapter 16.

¹¹⁴ Nussbaum, “Morality and Emotions,” 562; and Nussbaum, “Emotions as Judgements,” 248 n.2.

¹¹⁵ Nussbaum, “Emotions as Judgements,” 234; & 237-38.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 235.

¹¹⁷ Nussbaum, “Morality and Emotions,” 560.

¹¹⁸ Nussbaum, “Equity and Mercy,” *passim*. This article, with Martha C. Nussbaum, “Compassion: The Basic Social Emotion,” *Social Philosophy & Policy* 13 no. 1 (1996), seems representative of *Upheavals* Part II, concerning public compassion.

¹¹⁹ Nussbaum, “*Wuthering Heights*,” 382.

¹²⁰ “Ascents of Love” forms Part III of *Upheavals*, where Nussbaum considers firstly the contemplative approaches to love found in Plato, Spinoza and Proust, followed by the Christian approaches of Augustine and Dante, proceeding to the Romantic approaches of Brönte and Mahler, to finish with the modern ‘democratic’ approaches of Whitman and Joyce. See n.113 for papers corresponding to some of Nussbaum’s chapters.

‘democratic’ traditions. Each of these is considered to represent an advance over the one preceding it. The general movement of the ‘ascent’ is as follows.

Nussbaum is deeply interested in Christianity, and its Augustinian contribution to the ‘ascent of love’. Against a contemplative Platonic tradition, the Christian thought of Augustine and Dante restores the emotions to a valued place in the good human life.¹²¹ Contrary to pagan thought, Christian love reopens a space for all the most intense emotions, “locating the most urgent good things outside the self rather than within it.” Indeed, love requires the intensification of the most intense emotions.¹²² She is highly appreciative of Augustine’s almost erotic passion in his declarations of love for God in *Confessiones*;¹²³ and she notices in the logic of the more analytical *De civitate Dei* how love is given to all humanity, but that the pilgrims toward the City of God differ in the objects of their strong emotions.¹²⁴ After further ‘ascents’ are found in Dante, she finds that Christian thought contributes to love’s ascent by taking seriously the subject’s agency, their receptivity, and the particularity of individual loves.¹²⁵ But she will finally set all this aside as wanting, believing Augustine to fail in his account of human *eros*, since the contrite soul advances toward the nonerotic life of heaven.¹²⁶

Thus she proceeds to Emily Brontë’s critique of Christianity, a critique primarily of its degenerate institutional form—it is hypocritical; hierarchical; unimaginative; and given to a static eschatology that denigrates movement and striving, and attenuates any impetus to ameliorate this-worldly concerns. “Would a keenly alive, surgingly erotic Augustinian Christianity”¹²⁷ be free from this? Augustinian Christianity should be more inclusive of the alien and stranger, and more able to accommodate liberty and imagination. This is “a serious reformulation of the ideal, not just a criticism of people who fail to live up to it.” But it is damned by something far deeper: a *fear and shame* in being wholly given to and for others—“a total exposure of the self to another’s touch and gaze”—which shame makes *the body and its erotic passions* to be its object.

So there is ultimately, [Brontë] suggests, a deep inconsistency between radical Augustinian openness to grace and the Augustinian attitude to the

¹²¹ Nussbaum, “Augustine and Dante,” 61.

¹²² Ibid., 62.

¹²³ Ibid. & 71-73.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 70.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 83.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 85.

¹²⁷ Nussbaum, “*Wuthering Heights*,” 376-79 for this and quotations following.

body and the worldly person. We cannot give our bodies to the world like Christ if we cannot manage, first, to inhabit them and make them ourselves.¹²⁸

But apart from this uncovering of a fundamental Augustinian *aporia* (allegedly), Nussbaum finds in Brontë no positive contribution to love's ascent. Thus she turns elsewhere for love's final ascent, arriving (by now unsurprisingly) at an account of love that has no static eschatology and no shame in the body or its erotic passions. She finds this in James Joyce, where

there is an Aristotelian kind of philosophy that is capable of including and accepting the surprises of the body and its sexuality, as many other-worldly philosophies, whether secular or religious, cannot.¹²⁹

This matters for philosophy, she seeks to argue, for connected to this acceptance is the overcoming of hatred and revenge. The long day of Mr. Leopold Bloom becomes a tender, if impudent, celebration of the sensual, the visceral, the earthy, the *everyday*—"the way real people are",¹³⁰ and devoid of all shame. "The comedy of the body ... contains the hope both of justice and love."¹³¹

This means, firstly, that real-life love is inconstant, imperfect, and comic in its realisations of the Romantic ideal (such as Brontë's): and to this Joyce (through Molly) says, "Yes".¹³² And for Nussbaum it follows secondly, that Joyce has a political stance.¹³³ (It is effectively coextensive to her own 'universalist ethic'.) Joyce has been sexually explicit in order to claim that it is the *refusal* to accept erotic neediness, rather than that neediness itself, which generates revenge, localism, and hatred. A converse acceptance

is the essential basis for a sane political life, a life democratic, universalist, and also liberal ... The other-worldly metaphysical traditions, with their exorbitant demands, are ... accomplices of revenge, "dream(ing) their dreamy dreams" at the expense of the intensities of the real. When, against those traditions, one can embrace the real-life object with love—then one has not annihilation but joy, not the death of compassion but its fairest possibility.¹³⁴

Nussbaum is as first-rate an evangelist as any good Christian missionary. Like the Apostle before her, her universalist ethic will gladly "demolish arguments and every pretension" to "take captive every thought" (2 Cor. 10:5), even if her key allegiances differ from those of

¹²⁸ Ibid., 379.

¹²⁹ Nussbaum, "Transfiguration Everyday," 239.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 251.

¹³¹ Ibid., 260.

¹³² Ibid., 259.

¹³³ Ibid., 259-60.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 260.

the Apostle (who sought “the knowledge of God”, “to obey Christ”). Nussbaum’s ‘ascent’ of love finally terminates upon the self—our judgments, our bodies, and the Joycean transfigurations of everyday life—in a rejection of any other metaphysical or other-worldly conceits. But there is no embarrassment about a human *telos* in Nussbaum’s project, nor as a result, any difficulty in relating ethics to emotion, especially love. We will return to Nussbaum throughout the thesis.



In this chapter, I have shown that general definitions for ‘emotion’ and ‘passion’ embrace a wide range of meanings. The range of views I discussed began with some scientific approaches to emotion, and psychology’s ‘cognitive’ approach seemed promising. However, we also saw that scientific accounts of emotion cannot be meaningfully connected to ethics, despite Stevenson’s attempt to do so in ethical emotivism. It rather seems that *ethics* is needed for a proper understanding of *emotion*. That a ‘broader canvas’ is required, beyond scientific terms of reference, was seen in William Lyons’ scientifically oriented account, which requires the concepts of ‘telic order’ and ‘moral field’ to succeed.

I introduced Solomon and Nussbaum as two thinkers whose ‘broader canvas’ reintegrates reason and emotion. Solomon’s project turns out morally to order emotion around ‘self-esteem’. The ‘love’ to which Martha Nussbaum ‘ascends’ is bodily and sexual, and forms the basis of a ‘universalist’ ethic. We have seen both thinkers single out Augustine for disagreement.

We shall see in Chapter Two that the two broad movements we have seen (excluding Lyons, who parallels older conceptions) derive, respectively, from the competing legacies of Kant and Nietzsche.

Chapter III: Two Competing Legacies

We have seen both a lack of relationship between emotion and ethics (in science), and the attempt to relate them (in Nussbaum and Solomon). I will now outline Kant's and Nietzsche's views on the matter, which respectively anticipate the modern accounts.

In Section One I show how, on Kant's view, emotions have no place in ethical deliberation; but I will also show that Kant respects emotion, and cannot hold his view with complete consistency. He shares a bewilderment about emotion with the scientific approaches of the previous chapter.

I will then canvas in Section Two Nietzsche's rejection of this Enlightenment approach. Excellences are intrinsic to 'passion'; emotions energise and enhance life; and attempts morally to evaluate emotion are decadent. Emotions should be allowed free expression in a caste society ranked by excellence, irrespective of 'justice'. I will demonstrate Solomon's and Nussbaum's allegiance to Nietzsche's vision in reference to *individuals*, although they remain silent on the negative implications for a social system. We will also see that both agree with Nietzsche's assessment of Christian morality: it is 'other-worldly', 'life-denying', and hates the body and the 'passions'. (Nietzsche, as I will show, resorts to special pleading to sustain this judgment.)

In Section Three of this chapter I will make some comments preparatory to the theological investigation of Part Two. Firstly, theology's use of 'passion' and 'affection' enables Christian theology to speak more specifically than does the modern general term, 'emotion'. Secondly, a heuristic principle is offered against the misconception that modern neuroscience leaves 'no room for the soul'. Thirdly, a theological account of the emotions embraces delighted 'intoxications', and in a point of deep agreement with Nietzsche, is also unimpressed by Enlightenment ethics; but I also challenge Nietzsche's special pleading against Christian theology, and indicate what in Kant can be retained in a theological approach. Finally, I outline what is meant in this thesis by the multivalent term, 'the logic of love'.

1. The Kantian legacy

In this section I will show that for Kant, emotions have no place in ethical deliberation. I will show also that he respects emotion to the point where the consistency of his view comes under threat. He shares a bewilderment about emotion with the scientific approaches of the previous chapter.

In Kant's evocation of the 'hardened scoundrel', 'inclinations' and 'impulses of sensibility' (the language of emotion in *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*) are self-evidently distinct from matters of ethics:

There is no one—not even the most hardened scoundrel, if only he is otherwise accustomed to use reason—who, when one sets before him examples of honesty of purpose, of steadfastness in following good maxims, of sympathy and general benevolence ... does not wish that he might also be so disposed. He cannot bring this about in himself, though only because of his inclinations and impulses; yet at the same time he wishes to be free from such inclinations, which are burdensome to himself.¹³⁵

Although we might smile at the sense of burden carried by this scoundrel, that is not the point. Kant wishes to demonstrate that ethics constitutes “an order of things altogether different”, and continues:

Hence he proves, by this, that with a will free from impulses of sensibility he transfers himself in thought into an order of things altogether different from that of his desires in the field of sensibility, since from that wish he can expect no satisfaction of his desires and hence no condition that would satisfy any of his actual or otherwise imaginable inclinations (for if he expected this, the very idea which elicits that wish from him would lose its preeminence); he can expect only a greater inner worth of his person.¹³⁶

That is, implicit in his “wish” to be honest, steadfast, and benevolent, is the recognition that betterment of the “inner worth of his person” would prevail against his wants and desires. Fundamental to this account is a distinction between a world of “understanding” and a world of “sense”:

This better person, however, he believes himself to be when he transfers himself to the standpoint of a member of the world of understanding, as the idea of freedom, that is, of independence from *determining* causes of the world of sense, constrains him involuntarily to do; and from this standpoint he is conscious of a good will that, by his own acknowledgements, constitutes the law for his evil will as a member of the world of sense—a law of whose authority he is cognizant even while he transgresses it.¹³⁷

This is of course Kant's continuation, for practical reason, of his groundbreaking project in the first *Critique* (published four years earlier) to knit together the epistemologies of empiricism and rationalism. 'Inclinations' and 'impulses' (and elsewhere, 'desires') are uncontroversially a part of the world of sense; and any resignation to the world of sense is a capitulation to heteronomy, and thus unacceptable, given the freedom Kant understands to

¹³⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), ed. Mary J. Gregor and Allen W. Wood, tr. Mary J. Gregor, Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant: *Practical Philosophy*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), 101 (AK 4:454). The *Cambridge Edition's* cross-references to the Berlin Academy Edition of Kant's works are shown here as 'AK volume:page number'.

¹³⁶ Ibid. (AK 4:454).

¹³⁷ Ibid. (AK 4:454-55).

be distinctive to rational agents.¹³⁸ Even the scoundrel knows this, when he ‘steps in and out’ of the “intelligible world”:

The moral ‘*ought*’ is then his own necessary ‘*will*’ as a member of an intelligible world, and is thought by him as ‘ought’ only insofar as he regards himself at the same time as a member of the world of sense.¹³⁹

To put it crudely: when he *thinks*, he is autonomous and free, *knowing and willing* the good. It is only when he *feels*, that this good forecloses against him, unpleasantly, as an “ought”.

This ‘scoundrel’ is offered by Kant merely as an illustration, “[t]he practical use of common human reason”, to confirm at this point in the *Groundwork* his synthetic *a priori* deduction of the categorical imperative. But the scoundrel offers a cameo of some persistent themes in the *Groundwork*. At the outset, in the preface to the work, Kant announces his intention “to work out for once a pure moral philosophy, completely cleansed of everything that may only be empirical and that belongs to anthropology”, since “that there must be such a philosophy is clear of itself from the common idea of duty and moral laws”.¹⁴⁰ It was never likely to be the case that such an approach would consider the emotions as a part of its ambit, and it becomes less so once Kant introduces his formidable claims for the universality of any true moral law. The universalisability of maxims, and so the categorical imperative, is founded upon the absolute equality of all persons; thus there can be no place for vague and varied feelings. Therefore it follows that the emotions are at best irrelevant:

To be beneficent where one can is a duty, and besides there are many souls so sympathetically attuned that, without any other motive or self-interest they find an inner satisfaction in spreading joy around them and can take delight in the satisfaction of others so far as it is their own work. But I assert that in such a case an action of this kind, however it may conform with duty and however amiable it may be, has nevertheless no true moral worth but is on the same footing with other inclinations ...¹⁴¹

Kant goes on to imagine the philanthropist overcome by grief, in whom all sympathy is extinguished. “[S]uppose that now, when no longer incited to it by any inclination, he nevertheless tears himself out of this deadly insensibility and does the action without any inclination, simply from duty; then the action first has genuine moral worth.”¹⁴² Only this view can render intelligible the scriptural command to love the enemy, since

love as an inclination cannot be commanded, but beneficence from duty—even though no inclination impels us to it and, indeed, natural and

¹³⁸ Ibid., 99 (AK 4:452).

¹³⁹ Ibid., 101 (AK 4:455).

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 44 (AK 4:389).

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 53 (AK 4:398).

¹⁴² Ibid., 54 (AK 4:399).

unconquerable aversion opposes it—is *practical* and not *pathological* love, which lies in the will and not in the propensity of feeling, in principles of action and not in melting sympathy; and it alone can be commanded.¹⁴³

That this love “lies in the will” relies upon Kant’s primary assertion that “[i]t is impossible to think of anything at all in the world, or indeed beyond it, that could be considered good without limitation except a **good will**.”¹⁴⁴ This ‘will’ is the fundamental locus of Kant’s good, and operates in league with the intellect to bring human action into the world of sense. We shall see that this resembles an account of the human person also found in Aquinas. But whereas Aquinas’ universe is theonomous, good and ordered, Kant’s universe is stripped of any such ‘heteronomous’ predicates.

But this extreme separation of feeling from thought has not come from nowhere. Twenty-three years prior to the *Groundwork*, Kant held to a moral-sense theory (that goodness is apprehended directly, as a feeling), in which he is thought to have been influenced by the Scottish philosopher Frances Hutcheson.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, just as Kant’s philosophical enquiries represent a mediation between rationalism and empiricism, so also do his ethical enquiries represent an arbitration within an eighteenth century crucible of ethical disagreement. Paul McReynolds grasps the milieu within which the moral sense theorists found themselves (and which, as we have seen, is still current):

Hutcheson lived in an age when there was tremendous interest in ethical questions. The moral superstructure that had lent stability throughout the long medieval period had lost its effectiveness some time before, and the need in his time was to discover, or to develop, a new and more stable moral paradigm. Though a number of systematic proposals, including that of Hutcheson, were put forth, none of these, as it turned out, gained general acceptance—nor indeed, have any of the metaethical systems developed since that time, and the moral crisis that we face today is fundamentally a part of the same crisis that confronted Hutcheson’s era.¹⁴⁶

On this account,¹⁴⁷ disputants such as Hobbes and Mandeville (and perhaps Locke) argue pragmatically that social order is founded upon the co-operation of desires among selfish and self-interested agents:

Vast Numbers thronged the fruitful Hive;
Yet those vast Numbers made ‘em thrive;

¹⁴³ Ibid. (AK 4:399). Gregor glosses *pathologische* as ‘dependent upon sensibility’ (note j).

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 49 (AK 4:393).

¹⁴⁵ Allen Wood, introduction to *ibid.*, xiii-xiv.

¹⁴⁶ Paul McReynolds; in Frances Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections: With Illustrations on the Moral Sense* (1742), with a foreword by Paul McReynolds, (Gainsville: Scholars’ Facsimiles and Reprints, 1969), ix.

¹⁴⁷ With the older account of W. R. Sorley, “Berkeley and Contemporary Philosophy,” in *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, eds Adolphus W. Ward and Alfred R. Waller, 18 vols., vol. 9 (Cambridge: University Press, 1907-27), 296-302.

Millions endeavouring to supply
Each other's Lust and Vanity

...

Thus every Part was full of Vice,
Yet the whole Mass a Paradise;
Flatter'd in Peace, and fear'd in Wars
They were th'Esteem of Foreigners ...¹⁴⁸

Against this are the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, Bishop Joseph Butler, and Frances Hutcheson, all of whom oppose theories of self-interest and argue for a human nature that includes natural social 'affections' from which morality derives.

This dispute among Britons, then, assumes the affections to be centrally significant for ethics, turning on a presumption that human affections are either primarily selfish or disinterested, constituted in fundamental self-interest or benevolence. But the shared presumption—that the good is accessed by affection—is jettisoned by Kant. Just two years after his initial endorsement of moral-sense theory, Kant begins to back away, precisely *because* feelings are not uniform and no agreement about them can be reached.¹⁴⁹

That his initial sympathies lay with Hutcheson underlines his antipathy to Hobbes and Mandeville, which is retained in his trenchant hostility to all forms of utilitarianism. But this distancing indicates his dissatisfaction with a moral-sense kind of solution, even if he retains with moral-sense theory the same impetus to find a moral law independent of self-interest. But if readers of Kant are initially scandalised by the exclusion of emotion from the calculation of moral worth,¹⁵⁰ then his clarification of the moral-sense issue (near the end of the *Groundwork*) is an additional surprise. For an appropriate set of feelings, which he denotes as "interest" and even "pleasure", might follow from duteous exaction of the moral law, even if it must insistently be denied that any explanation can be offered for this experience, or that a heteronomous morality can be derived from it:

The subjective impossibility of *explaining* the freedom of the will is the same as the impossibility of discovering and making comprehensible an *interest* which the human being can take in moral laws; and yet he does really take an interest in them, the foundation of which in us we call moral feeling, which some have falsely given out as the standard for our moral appraisal whereas it must rather be regarded as the *subjective* effect that the law exercises on the will, to which reason alone delivers the objective grounds.

In order for a sensibly affected rational being to will that for which reason alone prescribes the 'ought', it is admittedly required that his reason have the

¹⁴⁸ Bernard Mandeville, *The Grumbling Hive* (1705), edited by Jack Lynch (HTML e-text, transcribed from the 1705 edition, accessed April 6th 2003; available from <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Texts/hive.html>; consult jlynch@andromeda.rutgers.edu), ll. 31-34 & 155-59. Cf. below, 271.

¹⁴⁹ Mary J. Gregor and Allen W. Wood, eds., *Immanuel Kant: Practical Philosophy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), xiii-xiv.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, xix-xx.

capacity to *induce a feeling of pleasure* or of delight in the fulfilment of duty... But it is quite impossible to see, that is, to make comprehensible a priori, how a mere thought which itself contains nothing sensible produces a feeling of pleasure or displeasure ... [F]or us human beings it is quite impossible to explain how and why the *universality of a maxim as law* and hence morality interests us. This much only is certain: it is not *because the law interests* us that it has validity for us (for that is heteronomy and dependence of practical reason upon sensibility, namely upon a feeling lying at its basis, in which case it could never be morally lawgiving); instead, the law interests us because it is valid for us as human beings.¹⁵¹

Thus unlike caricatures of his position, Kant is deeply perceptive of the way emotions and dispositions can somehow become allied to ethics. We wonder if he even hopes for this in people, recalling his famous and more personal manner of saying something similar. “Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and reverence, the more often and more steadily one reflects upon them: *the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me.*”¹⁵² But he is genuinely mystified by this, knowing only that it can form no sound basis for ethics. As in the *Groundwork*, so in the final emphasis of the second *Critique*: “though admiration and respect can indeed excite enquiry, they cannot supply the want of it.”¹⁵³

Even so, we note that in his discussion of the scoundrel, “sympathy” has slipped in among that which is set before the scoundrel as morally upright.¹⁵⁴ We wonder if even Kant can keep watertight the distinction he seeks to assert—“thus calling into question the harshness of his ruthlessly divided self.”¹⁵⁵ In this respect, Solomon also observes how rationalist notions of human dignity “are sometimes suggested to be matters of feeling as well as of reason”; how the *Critique of Judgment* celebrated ‘intersubjective’ feeling; and Kant’s own utterance, that “nothing is ever done without passion”.¹⁵⁶

Kant commands the majority position in modern ethics, not in that the majority of modern ethicists are Kantian, but certainly in that the majority of modern ethics adopts his strategy, against intuitionism and emotivism, of sidelining matters of emotion (even, now, among utilitarians).

¹⁵¹ Kant, 105-06 (AK 4:460-61).

¹⁵² Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), ed. Mary J. Gregor and Allen W. Wood, tr. Mary J. Gregor, Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant: *Practical Philosophy*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), 269 (AK 5:162).

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 270 (AK 5:162).

¹⁵⁴ Kant, *Groundwork*, 101 (AK 4:454); see above, 47.

¹⁵⁵ Solomon, “Philosophy of Emotions,” 8.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

I will not attempt to draw laborious connections between Kant and the scientific approaches of the previous chapter; but both obviously reflect the same general rationalistic Enlightenment approach to emotion. The scientific account of emotion cannot meaningfully be joined to ethics, and the ethics of Kant cannot meaningfully be joined to emotion. I will risk some further assertions in passing. The post-enlightenment split between fact and value (from which the so-called the ‘naturalistic fallacy’ in ethics derives) seems largely to *consist* in the Enlightenment distillation of ‘emotion’ from ‘reason’. Kant and Stevenson represent opposing rationalist views on the place of emotion in ethics, because both share an Enlightened bewilderment about emotion.

Solomon’s sound objections owe their intellectual allegiance to Nietzsche’s rejection of the Enlightenment approach that I have outlined.

2. The Nietzschean legacy

I will now canvas Nietzsche’s rejection of the Enlightenment approach. In his alternative approach to the relationship between ethics and emotion, excellences are intrinsic to ‘passion’, and emotions energise and enhance life. Therefore attempts morally to evaluate emotion are decadent, and emotions should be allowed free expression. The ideal social order for Nietzsche’s view is a caste society ranked by excellence, irrespective of ‘justice’. I will go on to demonstrate Solomon’s and Nussbaum’s allegiance to Nietzsche’s vision for *individuals*, although they remain silent on the negative implications for a social system. We will also see that both agree with Nietzsche’s assessment of Christian morality: it is ‘other-worldly’, ‘life-denying’, and hates the body and the ‘passions’—judgments that are sustained by special pleading. Nietzsche’s notorious unsystematicity calls for a more discursive approach, which will resolve itself into a series of themes that bear directly upon our concerns.

a) Disagreement with Kant but appropriation of science

Much of Nietzsche’s polemic is overtly directed toward a Kantian-style deontology:

A word against Kant as a *moralist*. A virtue has to be *our* invention, *our* most personal defence and necessity: in any other sense it is merely a danger. What does not condition our life *harms* it: a virtue merely from a feeling of respect for the concept of ‘virtue’, as Kant desired it, is harmful. ‘Virtue’, ‘duty’, ‘good in itself’, impersonal and universal—phantoms, expressions of decline, of the final exhaustion of life, of Königsbergian Chinadom. The profoundest laws of preservation and growth demand the reverse of this: that each one of us should devise *his own* virtue, *his own* categorical imperative. A people perishes if it mistakes *its own* duty for the concept of duty in general. An action compelled by the instinct of life has in the joy of performing it the proof it is a *right* action: and that nihilist with Christian-dogmatic bowels understands joy as an *objection* ...¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ* (1895), tr. Reginald J. Hollingdale, with a foreword by Michael Tanner,

So much for Kant (and the Chinese). But Nietzsche's engagement with science and scientists is a contrasting study of balletic ambivalence. In one key respect, he is unimpressed with science:

[W]hen we view it physiologically ... science rests on the same base as the ascetic ideal: the precondition of both the one and the other is a certain *impoverishment of life*,—the emotions cooled, the tempo slackened, dialectics in place of instinct, *solemnity* stamped on faces and gestures (solemnity, that most unmistakable sign of a more sluggish metabolism and of a struggling, more toiling life).¹⁵⁸

The rise of scientific consciousness, then, depreciates humanity. "Gone, alas, is [man's] faith in his dignity, uniqueness, irreplaceableness in the rank-ordering of beings".¹⁵⁹ (We will see this 'rank ordering' to be a primary Nietzschean concern). But there is ambivalence, because the 'physiology' in this complaint, which figures widely in Nietzsche's thought, is the scientific basis upon which he will revalue all values. "[E]very table of values, every 'thou shalt' known to history or the study of ethnology, needs first and foremost a *physiological* elucidation and interpretation, rather than a psychological one; and all of them await critical study from medical science."¹⁶⁰ Science thus serves to kick the struts out from under dogmatic Christianity, whose scrupulous morality—its "confessional punctiliousness" as translated into "intellectual purity at any price"—founded it. This is "Europe's bravest and most protracted self-overcoming"; but it is to continue into the overthrow of Christian morality.¹⁶¹

How is this balletic ambivalence to be understood? Probably in terms of the "history of an error"—Nietzsche's descending history of the notion of the 'real world'.¹⁶² The access to the 'real world' supplied by classical wisdom was wrested from it by Christianity, which promises the 'real world' to all, but only in the eschaton. Kant's transcendently metaphysical 'real world' follows; it is the Christian ideal "grown sublime, pale". Kant is in turn supplanted by positivist scepticism, the consciousness of science, for which the impetus is a 'real world' unattained and unknown. But even this gives way to that place

Penguin Classics edition, including *Twilight of the Idols*, (London: Penguin, 1990), 134 (§11).

¹⁵⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality* (1887), ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson, tr. Carol Diethe, *Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought* edition, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 121 (§III.25).

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 122 (§III.25). Cf. 116-17 (§III.23) where scientific consciousness is variously described as an "abyss", "a *hiding place*" for "ill-humour, unbelief, nagging worms, ... bad conscience", "a means of self-anaesthetic", in view of its lack, basically, of ideals and passion.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 37 (§I.17, concluding note).

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 126-27 (§III.27); cf. Nietzsche, *Anti-Christ*, 48 (§48) for God's own 'fear' of science.

¹⁶² Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* (1889), tr. Reginald J. Hollingdale, with a foreword by Michael Tanner, *Penguin Classics* edition, including *The Anti-Christ*, (London: Penguin, 1990), 50-51 ("How the 'Real World' at last Became a Myth").

where “all free spirits run riot”, where the ‘real world’, and then even the apparent world, are abolished—and Zarathustra (which is to say, Nietzsche) begins. Within this history, the virtue of science is in its liberations; but a superficial timidity is its vice.

The “history of an error” might seem to support the view that Nietzsche promoted anarchism or nihilism. But whatever we eventually make of such readings, they are neither supported nor denied by his attitude to emotion.

b) Emotions as ‘enhancement of life’

Nietzsche’s demand on behalf of the emotions is simply to let them be, since they are about what we purpose; and what we purpose concerns our deepest instincts for life. (This is the point of the objection to Kant.¹⁶³) Even seriously negative moods are to be reckoned along these lines:

Let us be careful not to pull gloomy faces as soon as we hear the word ‘torture’: in precisely this case, we have plenty to put down on the other side of the account, plenty to deduct—we even have some reason to laugh. For we must not underestimate the fact that Schopenhauer, who actually treated sexuality as a personal enemy (including its tool, woman, that ‘*instrumentum diaboli*’) needed enemies to stay cheerful; that he loved wrathful, bilious, bitter-black words; that he got angry for the sake of it, passionately; that he would have become ill, a *pessimist* (—because he was not one, however much he wanted to be) without his enemies ...¹⁶⁴

Thus emotions, whatever their hue, can energise and enhance ‘life’. Any attempt, then, to police or codify or otherwise morally to evaluate emotion, represents decline or decadence or sickness. Moreover, the attempt will be toward some ulterior motive, which will resolve itself as a (now perverse) exercise of the same will to power. Emotions are so ceaselessly active, and so energisingly powerful, that physiology makes intelligible certain phenomena that have been generally overlooked until Nietzsche. Emphatically *unlike* Schopenhauer,

every sufferer instinctively looks for a cause of his distress ... for a living being upon whom he can release his emotions, actually or in effigy, on some pretext or other: because the release of emotions is the greatest attempt at relief, or should I say, at *anaesthetizing* on the part of the sufferer, his involuntarily longed-for narcotic against pain of any kind.¹⁶⁵

The problem here is not the negativity of the emotion—rather, it is the attempt to anaesthetise or sublimate it in a ‘sickly’ manner. The same passage continues:

In my judgment, we find here the actual physiological causation of *ressentiment*, revenge and their ilk, in a yearning, then, to *anaesthetize pain through emotion* ... The sufferers, one and all, are frighteningly willing and inventive in their pretexts for painful emotions; they even enjoy being

¹⁶³ See above, 52.

¹⁶⁴ Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, 80 (§III.7).

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 99 (§III.15).

mistrustful and dwelling on wrongs and imagined slights: they rummage through the bowels of their past and present for obscure, questionable stories which will allow them to wallow in tortured suspicion ...¹⁶⁶

Indeed this is the substratum of *ressentiment* used with skill by the ascetic priest, who learns “to detonate this explosive material without blowing up either the herd or the shepherd”,¹⁶⁷ by changing its object from anyone near the sufferer, to the self of each sufferer. This is why Nietzsche considers the Christian account of ‘sin’ to be fictive (“not a fact, but rather the interpretation of a fact, namely a physiological upset”¹⁶⁸). Likewise, he holds Christian ‘love’ merely to represent the avoidance of pain (“The fear of pain, even of the infinitely small in pain—*cannot* end otherwise than in a *religion of love* . . .”¹⁶⁹).

A better way would be to let these emotions simply to be, and nobly to accept pain, with no search for any culprit. The attack by a noble upon an enemy,¹⁷⁰ like any reflexive outburst of emotion to prevent pain or loss,¹⁷¹ is fundamentally healthier. To allow this kind of beastliness will prevent us becoming bestial.¹⁷²

c) Nietzsche’s societal order

However, it is hard to see how this last claim coheres with Nietzsche’s florid celebration of prowling nobles, “exultant monsters” who commit “murder, arson, rape and torture”, each one a “magnificent *blond beast*” who is convinced that bards will sing of his exploits.¹⁷³ Scholarship tends beatifically to absolve Nietzsche of extraordinary inconsistencies such as this, with the questioner’s requirement for the resolution of inconsistency somehow devolving into a critique of the questioner. Nevertheless, we are forced to wonder if this *is* an account of emotion that promotes such ‘beastly’ despotisms as Nazism. Continuing and immediately following the quote against science, his playful polemic reaches a (for us) stomach-churning climax:

Look at the epochs in the life of a people during which scholars predominated: they are times of exhaustion, often of twilight, of decline,—gone are the overflowing energy, the certainty of life, the certainty as to the *future*. The preponderance of the mandarins never indicates anything good:

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. (§III.15).

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. (§III.15).

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 100 (§III.16); cf. Nietzsche, *Anti-Christ*, 177-78 (§49).

¹⁶⁹ Nietzsche, *Anti-Christ*, 154 (§30).

¹⁷⁰ Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, 24-25 (§§I.10-11).

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 99 (§III.15). We need see no contradiction between the acceptance of pain and the avoidance of it (noting that in each case, Nietzsche refers to physical pain, not some ‘psychic’ version).

¹⁷² Ibid., 69 (§II.22).

¹⁷³ Ibid., 25 (§I.11).

any more than the rise of democracy, international courts of arbitration instead of wars, equal rights for women, the religion of pity and everything else that is a symptom of life in decline.¹⁷⁴

Elsewhere, Nietzsche describes an ascetic lifestyle, sought by philosophers, for the self-interested purpose of enhancing philosophical reflection. The requisite environment includes “freedom from compulsion, disturbance, noise, business, duties ... good, thin, clear, free, dry air”¹⁷⁵—which might equally pass for a description of his own retreats to idyllic rural Sils-Maria. In itself, this is not a problem. Indeed, though he would rather describe himself as a psychologist than a philosopher, perhaps this mode of existence just honestly describes his own simple joys.

But no modern reader can evade that he wrote in such a place during a time of ordered tranquility. To deride democracy, courts, equal rights and religious ‘pity’ is affordable to him in a way that is closed to us. The tyranny and war of twentieth-century memory—even just the Taliban oppressions that have recently come to light—render embarrassing, even obscene, the predication of his examples as “life in decline”. (This is particularly so for the last two—“equal rights for women, the religion of pity”—in the case of the Taliban.) Can this attempt at transvaluation (“never ... anything good”) be respected, on any reading? In this connection, Philippa Foot cites Thomas Mann’s rueful 1947 comment: “How bound in time, how theoretical too, how inexperienced does Nietzsche’s romanticizing about wickedness appear ... today! We have learnt to know it in all its miserableness.”¹⁷⁶ She weighs the usual attacks and defences of Nietzsche alongside passages that deride tyranny and affirm gentleness. Notwithstanding, she finds that “Nietzschean teaching is inimical to justice.”¹⁷⁷

In actuality, *it certainly does not follow from this* that Nietzsche is anarchistic, or nihilistic, or a naively romantic adulator of tyranny.¹⁷⁸ The debate over this is too extensive to pursue here, but one aspect of it is central to our purpose. This is the degree to which Nietzsche is hostile to, or an apologist for, certain kinds of ‘order’. It is easily argued that a positive project is found amongst Nietzsche’s polemic, toward a deeply rigid and ‘life enhancing’ natural order that has been tragically lost. To call this a ‘positive project’ may be an

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 121 (§III.25).

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 82 (§III.8).

¹⁷⁶ Cited in Philippa Foot, “Nietzsche’s Immoralism,” in *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality: Essays on Nietzsche’s Genealogy of Morals*, ed. Richard Schacht, (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1994), 7.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 13.

¹⁷⁸ See Robert C. Solomon, “Nietzsche, Nihilism and Morality,” in *Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Robert C. Solomon, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980; originally published Anchor/Doubleday, 1973), 206-207, 233-24 & passim for a nuanced and very persuasive statement of this point.

overstatement, since it is present only in prototype. But present indeed it is; and its *order* is of *rank*.

As a foil to his hostility against the New Testament, Nietzsche praises the ancient Indian *Code of Manu*.¹⁷⁹ Again, there is inconsistency here, since the *Code* is not really a paragon of freedom from the asceticism he so abhors.¹⁸⁰ But he admires there the strength of the *Code's* society, founded upon a natural order of rank (in this case, the caste system), exemplifying how “the *noble* orders, the philosophers and the warriors, keep the mob under control: noble values everywhere, a feeling of perfection, an affirmation of life”.¹⁸¹ To be sure, there are “holy lies” here, since “[n]ature, not Manu” separates the spiritual, the muscular and the mediocre as different castes.¹⁸² Nevertheless, such a “grand organization of society” is “the supreme condition for the *prosperity* of life”.¹⁸³ Noble morality (as rejected by Christian *ressentiment*) is “all that represents the *ascending* movement of life, well-constitutedness, power, beauty, self-affirmation on earth”,¹⁸⁴ “the expression of the conditions under which a nation lives and grows... a nation’s deepest instinct of life”.¹⁸⁵

Thus his oft-repeated rejection of “moral order”¹⁸⁶ cannot be understood as a rejection of order as such. Morality is *not* to be transvalued into despotism; that is a misreading—and on this basis, the argument that Nietzsche would have scorned the ignoble, *ressentiment* driven disorders of Nazism, could be made deeply persuasive. Rather, the re-evaluation is to be remapped to a rigid naturalist social hierarchy of excellence. Christianity’s offence is in its sabotage of the possibilities for the kind of life together that could follow:

So to live that there is no longer any *meaning* in living: *that* now becomes the ‘meaning’ of life. . . . What is the point of public spirit, what is the point of gratitude for one’s descent and one’s forefathers, what is the point of co-operation, trust, of furthering and keeping in view the general welfare? . . . So many ‘temptations’, so many diversions from the ‘straight path’—“*one thing* is needful”. . . .¹⁸⁷

¹⁷⁹ Nietzsche, *Anti-Christ*, 187-92 (§56-58).

¹⁸⁰ “Hunting, gambling, sleeping by day, censoriousness, (excess with) women, drunkenness, (an inordinate love for) dancing, singing, and music, and useless travel are the tenfold set (of vices) springing from love of pleasure.” *Indian History Sourcebook: The Laws of Manu* (c. 1500 BC), translated by G. Buhler (HTML e-text, accessed April 6th 2003; available from <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/india/manu-full.html>), VII.47.

¹⁸¹ Nietzsche, *Anti-Christ*, 187 (§56).

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 189-90 (§57).

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 192 (§58).

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 147 (§24).

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 148 (§25). This glimpse of Nietzsche’s positive project occurs in an argument against Christianity’s denial of it; thus negating clauses have been omitted.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, *passim* (§§25-26; 38; 49).

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 168 (§43), and quoting Luke 10:42.

The rejection of Kant is complete, and if Nietzsche is “inimical to justice”, then so much for justice. It is in any case an inflated version of slave morality, and the product of a sickly herd. The enhancement of life, and democratic justice, cannot stand together.

It is worth pausing to notice the degree to which Nietzsche’s thought affects the positions we have seen.

d) Solomon’s and Nussbaum’s debt to Nietzsche

Robert C. Solomon’s debt to Nietzsche is overt. We have seen his affirmation of Nietzsche,¹⁸⁸ which is particularly clear in the equation between the enhancement of life, and ‘personal dignity and self-esteem’. That Socrates’ drunkenness, T.E. Lawrence’s “self-inflicted hardship and torture”, and Goethe’s promiscuity are of interest to him in this makes vastly more sense once Nietzsche’s project has been reckoned with. In this reading of Nietzsche, any ‘passionate’ life is of more interest than the Kantian opposite that Solomon (with Nietzsche) ranges himself against. We can also see the impetus for basing a moral ordering of emotion upon whatever enhances life, dignity, self-esteem. But we should note in passing, for we shall return to it in a moment, that whereas Nietzsche was concerned (in the early works, at least) with the life, dignity and self esteem *of a people*, Solomon’s reading makes Nietzsche’s point to revolve around the ‘surreality’ *of a person*.

Nussbaum’s debt to Nietzsche is less overt, but fundamental nonetheless, even given her general neo-Aristotelian tendencies. One complex article develops “Nietzsche’s remarkable account of the ways in which the intoxication of passion transfigures the self”, finding a “power of love”¹⁸⁹ that “transforms the subject into a being who seems stronger, richer, deeper.”¹⁹⁰

Love’s magic is illusion, in the sense that it corresponds to no preexisting reality in the order of things. And yet it is its own this-worldly reality, and its fiction-making makes fictions that are gloriously there. Nietzsche adds, as elsewhere, that this intoxication of the erotic is a great motive to the affirmation of life in general.¹⁹¹

While formally descriptive, the conclusion acts as a piece of ‘ethical criticism’ in service of Nussbaum’s ‘ascents of love’. Other affirmations of Nietzsche are numerous. Augustine’s alleged concern to “dredge up the past rather than sever himself from it” has been

¹⁸⁸ Cf. also Solomon, “Nihilism,” and Solomon’s editorial appreciation in his introduction to the same volume (Robert C. Solomon, ed. *Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays*, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980; originally published Anchor/Doubleday, 1973), 1-8).

¹⁸⁹ Martha C. Nussbaum, “The Transfigurations of Intoxication: Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and Dionysus,” *Arion* (third series) 1 no. 2 (1991): 77.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 107.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 107-08.

“perceptively analyzed” by Nietzsche in his treatment of ‘bad conscience’.¹⁹² She notes how Joyce was an admirer of Nietzsche, and as we have seen, Nussbaum is an admirer of Joyce.¹⁹³ Like Nietzsche, she is contemptuous of conservative concern toward “threats to order and morals”.¹⁹⁴ There are strong parallels between Nietzsche’s “history of an error” (where the ‘myth’ of the ‘real world’ moves from contemplatives to Christians through to modern “free spirits” who abolish the notion), and her own “ascents of love” (where thinly contemplative love moves through Christianity to become the earthly, this-worldly love of each agent).

Both of these liberal appropriations of Nietzsche find attractive that morally speaking, “[w]e want to be the poets of our own lives”.¹⁹⁵ But whereas ‘equal rights’ were abhorred by Nietzsche as one of the many sickly aspects of herd morality, neither is interested to endorse *that* point, nor to show any solidarity with Nietzsche’s admiration of caste society. Solomon is certainly aware that, as we have seen, Nietzsche’s complaint is not against moral order as such, but against Christianity’s particular, and universalist, view of it;¹⁹⁶ and Solomon even quotes Nietzsche’s declaration that “[m]y philosophy aims at an ordering of rank; not an individualist morality”.¹⁹⁷ Nevertheless, Solomon prefers to side-step this to find an existentialist reading: different people require different “self-overcomings” to live their will to power and “become who [they] are”¹⁹⁸—although Nietzsche is not, apparently, a relativist.¹⁹⁹

But pointedly, the question to be put to these readings is whether it is possible to take hold of the life-enhancing, power-of-love, poets-of-our-soul dimensions of Nietzsche, without giving an account of the social order (or disorder) within which persons shaped by these Nietzschean conceptions might find themselves situated. (Nussbaum’s position is particularly curious here. The sabotage of local metaphysics is somewhat Nietzschean, but her project to impose a universalist ethic at the expense of traditional hierarchical cultures—certainly a commitment to *moral* order, rigidly conceived—is profoundly anti-Nietzschean.

¹⁹² Nussbaum, “Augustine and Dante,” 69.

¹⁹³ Nussbaum, “Transfiguration Everyday,” 255 n.28.

¹⁹⁴ Martha C. Nussbaum, “A Classical Case for Gay Studies—the Softness of Reason,” *New Republic* 207 no. 3-4 (1992): 27.

¹⁹⁵ Nietzsche, *Gay Science* §299; cited in Foot, 6.

¹⁹⁶ Solomon, “Nihilism,” 223-24 & passim.

¹⁹⁷ Nietzsche, *Will to Power* §287; cited in *ibid.*, 208.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 222 & 225 respectively.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.

She appropriates Aristotle to ground a universal and rational ethic, but as we proceed, we will have cause to question the validity of this ground.) Nazi readings of Nietzsche required radical selectivity to support anti-Semitism and Aryan supremacy. Nussbaum's and Solomon's modern liberal readings also require radical selectivity, differing only in what is selected. Selective appropriation will always give Nietzsche's thought several outcomes; the material is particularly susceptible to it. Solomon knows this: "There is so much here that everyone can find his own Nietzsche. This is not to say that there is no distinction between responsible and reproachable Nietzsche scholarship"²⁰⁰—upon what grounds, though, we are left to wonder.

e) Theology as 'world denying' and 'body hating'

Most striking in both authors is their uncritical acceptance of Nietzsche's mediation to them of Christianity. Examples of this are legion, but almost all references to Christianity revolve around variations on two main complaints: Christian morality is "other-worldly" and therefore 'life-denying', and it involves a deep hatred of the body (and therefore of the 'passions'). Consider the complaint in Nietzsche's words:

[H]atred of the *senses*, of the joy of the senses, of joy in general is Christian.²⁰¹

We others, who have the *courage* for health *and* also for contempt, what contempt *we* have for a religion which teaches misunderstanding of the body! which does not wish to get rid of the soul superstition! which makes a 'merit' of eating too little! which combats health as a kind of enemy, devil, temptation! which has persuaded itself that a 'perfect soul' could be carried about in a cadaver of a body, and to do so needed to concoct a new conception of 'perfection', a pale, sickly idiot-fanatic condition, so-called 'holiness'—holiness itself merely a symptom-syndrome of the impoverished, enervated, incurable corrupted body!²⁰²

Read from a distant planet, the majuscule script of our earthly existence would perhaps seduce the reader to the conclusion that the earth was the ascetic planet *par excellence*, an outpost of discontented, arrogant and nasty creatures who harboured a deep disgust for themselves, for the world, for all life and hurt themselves as much as possible out of pleasure in hurting:—probably their only pleasure.²⁰³

This last follows the crescendo of his already acerbic attack on the 'ascetic priest', who is hostile to life (but to the end of his own self-preservation), by mastering the "deepest, strongest, most profound conditions" of life—"in particular the manifestation of this in beauty and joy; while satisfaction is looked for and found in failure, decay, pain,

²⁰⁰ Solomon, ed. *Collection*, 7.

²⁰¹ Nietzsche, *Anti-Christ*, 143 (§21).

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 180 (§51).

²⁰³ Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, 90 (§III.11).

misfortune, ugliness, voluntary deprivation, destruction of selfhood, self-flagellation and self-sacrifice.”²⁰⁴

This priest “does not belong to any race in particular; he thrives everywhere; he comes from every social class”²⁰⁵—though of course, the invective is crafted to serve the wider argument against the Christian version. One Reformation response to this problem, that the ascetic ideal is not in truth a Christian one, is met with an ironic approval. “Luther’s achievement is nowhere greater than precisely in having had the courage of his own *sensuality* (—at the time it was delicately referred to as ‘evangelical freedom’ . . .).”²⁰⁶ But lest it be thought that some Christianity is intrinsically life-affirming, Nietzsche will damn it with faint praise: the ascetic priests sometimes offer “the most cautious dose” of small pleasures—life-affirming impulses such as help, gifts, encouragement, comfort, praise, honour—as modest titbits to keep his sickly herd together.²⁰⁷

Clearly, an epic argument is to be had here. Christian theology, in at least some expressions of it, evidently *loves* the body, celebrates sensuality as potentially finding its summit experiences in marriage, and enjoys all the goods and ‘blessings’ of this-worldly life. Nietzsche cannot evade these expressions, and must resort to a form of special pleading in response.

But for Nussbaum, Nietzsche’s version of Christianity is straightforwardly to be accepted. “Surely Nietzsche is right” that Christianity confers despair upon its followers.²⁰⁸ Brontë’s point is Nietzsche’s point and is Nussbaum’s point: Christianity “teaches people to look to a static paradise in which all movement and striving cease. It thus teaches them to denigrate their own movement and striving”.²⁰⁹ She enjoys Nietzsche’s exposition of art “in an age that lacks the disfiguring self-hatred caused by a notion of original sin.”²¹⁰ “Centuries of Christian teaching have left us with so little self-respect for our bodies and their desires that we are convinced that anything we ourselves make up must be disorderly and perhaps even

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 90 (§III.11).

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 90-91 (§III.11).

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 73 (§III.2).

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 106-07 (§III.18).

²⁰⁸ Martha C. Nussbaum, “Our Pasts, Ourselves,” review of *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, by Charles Taylor, *New Republic* 202 no. 15 (1990): 31. Nietzsche’s claim is endorsed against Charles Taylor’s ‘hunch’ that a theistic account is the best account of moral identity.

²⁰⁹ Nussbaum, “*Wuthering Heights*,” 375.

²¹⁰ Nussbaum, “Transfigurations: Nietzsche,” 108.

evil.”²¹¹ These themes even govern her appreciation of Augustine’s exposition of love. Likewise Solomon accepts uncritically “the other-worldly foundations and goals of Christianity”.²¹²

3. The response of Christian theology

I have shown that scientific definitions of emotion, and their limitation for ethics, reflect a Kantian legacy. On the other hand, the competing Nietzschean legacy gives rise to Solomon’s and Nussbaum’s all-encompassing approach to emotion.

In this section I will make some comments preparatory to the theological investigation of Part Two. Firstly, a procedural linguistic point about theology’s use of ‘passion’ is made, contra Solomon. The terms ‘passion’ and ‘affection’ enable Christian theology to speak more specifically than does the modern general term, ‘emotion’. Secondly, a heuristic principle is offered against the misconception that modern neuroscience leaves ‘no room for the soul’. Thirdly, a theological account of the emotions embraces delighted ‘intoxications’, and in a point of deep agreement with Nietzsche, is also unimpressed by Enlightenment ethics; but I also challenge Nietzsche’s special pleading against Christian theology. I indicate what in Kant can be retained in a theological approach. Finally, I outline what is meant in this thesis by the multivalent term, ‘the logic of love’.

a) A linguistic complication

To set aside emotion as morally irrelevant is a modern feature of Kant’s thought. But unlike moderns, Kant draws his language for emotion from antiquity. This difference is important, for post-Kant, our own difficulties in talking about emotion have been compounded by a widespread flattening in the very language of emotion itself.

The point was well-made in Thomas Dixon’s recent essay offered in response to Milbank, Webster and others.²¹³ Dixon adopts an eirenic posture toward some narratives of modern science and proposes that rather than being ‘anti-theological’, they are more properly ‘atheological’.²¹⁴ As a specific instance of this, Dixon summarises the eighteenth century displacement of Christian psychology, which understood ‘passion’ and ‘affection’ within a trinitarian and soteriological framework. Secular psychology collapsed ‘passion’ and ‘affection’ into the single, anthropologically self-referential word ‘emotion’. This case

²¹¹ Ibid., 101.

²¹² Solomon, “Nihilism,” 207; cf. 220.

²¹³ Thomas Dixon, “Theology, Anti-Theology and Atheology: From Christian Passions to Secular Emotions,” *Modern Theology* 15 no. 3 (1999).

²¹⁴ Ibid., 299. The term is understood value-neutrally and equated with ‘untheological’.

study is offered as one example of an ‘atheological’ narrative supplanting a ‘theological’ one.²¹⁵ Both the validity of this main claim and the usefulness of the case study to illustrate it would have to be pursued elsewhere. But for our purposes, the case study itself is most illuminating.

Dixon distinguishes overtly theological approaches to psychology from those often called theological, but which Dixon regards as relying only upon a ‘thin theism’.²¹⁶ He then proposes four distinctive characteristics of eighteenth century theological psychology: the absence of a reason/passion dichotomy;²¹⁷ a distinction between ‘passion’ and ‘affection’;²¹⁸ a moral and social contextualisation of the passions and affections (as seen in the opposition of Butler, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Smith to Hobbes and Mandeville);²¹⁹ and the importance of the soul (with the relative unimportance of the body).²²⁰

In reaction to the last distinctive characteristic (the relative importance of the soul), late nineteenth- and twentieth-century behaviourist approaches and their associated theories of emotion (commencing with James) re-emphasise the body. To this end, “involuntary appetites, passions and commotions of animal nature as well as moral sentiments and voluntary affections, were all lumped together under the undifferentiated concept of ‘emotions’.”²²¹

According to Dixon, Solomon is unwittingly trapped within this movement. Solomon’s thorough synonymy of passion *with* emotion as ‘that which moves us’, is precisely

[where] the mistake lies. Solomon is quite on his own in the history of thought in taking ‘the passions’ to “cover the *entire range* of those phenomena that may be said to move us”. The passions, in traditional Christian psychology, form only a *subset* of those phenomena that move us. The affections, i.e., the voluntary movements of the soul, are the crucial second half of the traditional Christian picture. It is because Solomon erroneously supposes that the twentieth-century term ‘emotions’ can be used as a near-synonym for the classical word ‘passions’ (when in fact it covers many phenomena that used to be separated into passions on the one hand and

²¹⁵ A plea is then made that each specific issue in ‘science’ and ‘religion’ should be evaluated along similar lines, as against more traditional approaches that characterise the relationship monolithically, whether in terms of compatibilism or hostility.

²¹⁶ Dixon, 300.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 301.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 302.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 304; cf. above, 50.

²²⁰ Ibid., 303.

²²¹ Ibid., 302. Dixon traces rise of ‘emotion’ from Brown’s 1820 lectures through Bain and Darwin, and culminating in James’ seminal 1884 article. In this way, emotions became bodily manifestations understood simply as a part of our animal heritage (305-309).

affections on the other) that he makes these mistakes in his readings of the Christian tradition.²²²

Thus Dixon takes Solomon to task in connection with the first two distinctive characteristics of eighteenth-century Christian psychology (the absence of a reason/passion dichotomy; and a distinction between ‘passion’ and ‘affection’),²²³ believing him frankly to be mistaken in his attack upon the whole of Western history and Christian tradition under his ‘myth of the passions’ rubric. Although *affection* was regarded as the positive face of something that is referred to as ‘passion’ in its negative aspect, Solomon simply ignores it. Then, the cognitivist project poorly “reinvent[s] the richer and more balanced view of the passions and affections that was lost as a consequence of the predominance of a narrow scientific view during the period between c.1850 and c. 1930.”²²⁴

Various projects in Solomon may still deserve recognition: that ‘passions’ provide meaning (against their previously understood ‘de-meaning’ role); that in some sense they are choices; that not all passions are equal for whoever lives the ‘good life’; and the hope that they become part of a ‘harmonious strength’ in humanity. But if these are reinventions, it is now clear how Solomon’s work highlights my ‘MacIntyrean’ proposal. The very language of emotion is, for ethics, seriously defective. Thus in the blasted landscape of MacIntyre’s vision, Solomon’s reconstruction is unable to sustain ethical intelligibility.

b) Body and soul

For some people (perhaps at a more popular level), a query remains outstanding. Does the theologian have any place once the claims of neuroscience are before us? Perhaps neuroscience leaves “no room for the soul”, as one prominent neurobiologist and philosopher of mind declared in a recent radio interview. This is thought to follow from the materialist underpinnings of neuroscience, and from its alliance with evolutionary biology, and from certain views of the Christian ‘soul’. Repeated references to ‘the soul’ will follow in this work, so a brief digression is in order, if only to offer a heuristic method for readers troubled by such a complaint. (It is important to realise, however, that this complaint is not important enough to set our subsequent agenda.)

This ‘soul’ for which there is no longer ‘room’ in modern discussion, must of necessity be the soul of Cartesian dualism. Whether or not this is the same ‘soul’ considered by the thinkers in this work, we shall nonetheless see lively debates raging about the relationship

²²² Ibid., 303.

²²³ It appears an error has occurred in Dixon’s first reference to Solomon (ibid., 326 n.19), where the specific work is not cited; however this and subsequent references seem to follow our edition of Solomon, *Passions*.

²²⁴ Dixon, 311.

of the soul to its body. Augustine, Aquinas and Calvin all strenuously attack some views in favour of others, though with a conscious level of ‘slippage’ in their final position (since some matters remain a mystery). Generally, they opt for a ‘hylomorphic’ view, where the soul is totally grounded in the body, and indeed is so ‘stitched’ into the body—so much ‘the spouse of’ the body, in Augustine’s metaphor—that it is not comprehensible without its body.

The conversation here could drift off into the theological debate over body-soul dualism, or into philosophical debate about the mind. That is not our purpose here. The point is simply to suggest, as a method of heuristic engagement with these older texts, that we are not entirely out of place to think of the soul as doing the work that ‘central nervous system’ (CNS) does in our modern conception. (Usually the CNS is taken to include both the brain and the peripheral nerves.)

At first it might seem that modern ‘mind’ is the ‘soul’ of older thinkers. But the wider field covered by the CNS offers better parallels to what these older writers included in the ‘soul’. The CNS, though not an incorporeal substance, has emergent properties that cannot always be easily located corporeally. It is responsible for the animation of the body, is yet the seat of the self, and mediates the ‘feelings’ and stirrings that Chrysippus took to be the actual movements of the soul. There are even parallels to the ‘faculties’ of the soul that we shall later see in the psychology of Aquinas: the CNS has its structures for reason, appetite and apprehension; and Aquinas’ ‘irascible’ and ‘concupiscible’ emotions bear uncanny resemblance to some of Panksepp’s “basic emotional systems”. Without a doubt, the thinkers we are considering were very interested to offer, among other things, an empirical account of the functions of (what we call) the CNS; and the neurobiologist who found “no room for the soul”, had rather perhaps not found the wood for the trees. Of course the correspondence between soul and CNS is not total, and there is no need that it should be; indeed, we press the parallel too far at our peril.

Even given modern knowledge of the CNS and its psychological correlates, the ancient problem of *akrasia*—that we can ‘war’ even with ‘ourselves’, not doing what ‘we’ want—is just as mysterious and no closer to a solution. This alone should humble us enough to read ancient wisdom considerately. Even if for the sake of argument we granted every last given of the etiology offered by evolutionary biology, the requirement to unravel the conundrum of *how to live* is still upon us, since natural selection will take us nowhere soon.

But moderns will worry, perhaps rightly, when ancient thought drifts toward its penchant for dualism; and the ‘immortality of the soul’ might be thought to have no correspondence

with the CNS. On these points, Christian theology has no need for embarrassment in its use of ‘soul’. The Christian tradition has had its own reasons for fighting off the excesses of dualism (mainly, that the body is a created good). Indeed, Hans Wolff has shown how in its earliest Judeo-Christian usage ‘soul’ referred to the deepest needs of a human being, holistically understood.²²⁵ This conception is retained in NT Christianity when the ‘immortality of the soul’ is in fact a ‘resurrection of the body’, as guaranteed by that of Jesus. Until such a resurrection, God is held somehow to hold the ‘souls’ of people safe; the emphasis here is on the power of God, not the incorporeality of substance. A God such as this can remember and keep each person, perhaps like the melody of a song, and for the early Christian writers, the resurrection of Jesus was sufficient grounds not to worry.

Whether or not there is more to say about dualism, the findings of modern neuroscience are certainly no embarrassment to Christian theology. The theologians surveyed in Part Two each seek to describe many of the same phenomena that modern neuroscience tries to explain.

In this connection, we might gently note a welcome self-revelation by Panksepp. Relating the painful loss of his teenage daughter Tiina, and the devastating effect of her loss upon his life for some time (a “grief that has no end”²²⁶), he then recounts the delightful story of a younger Tiina once giving him an insight into the nature of the emotions. In keeping with the dedication of his book, an afterword to the story is, “Thanks, Tiina, wherever your spirit may be!”²²⁷

It is impertinent to speculate about the sense a bereaved father might mean for the interesting term ‘spirit’. It must certainly have been brave for this particular father so to speak, given the likelihood of some colleagues alleging an *aporia* here—as if a neuroscientist cannot believe in a ‘spirit’ of whatever form. But we should rather credit this scientist for leaving open the way for such a term, and his final gesture toward possibilities that science is less able to comprehend. “One hopes there will eventually be a world religion that will help us all, together, pay our respects to these abiding mysteries.”²²⁸ Perhaps it has already come amongst us; perhaps the authors we shall here discuss would be

²²⁵ Hans Walter Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament* tr. Margaret Kohl, (London: S.C.M., 1974), 17-18, & ch. II passim, on נֶפֶשׁ (*nepesh*).

²²⁶ Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience*, frontispiece.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, xi.

²²⁸ Panksepp, “Emotions,” 339.

very sympathetic to much of this man's professional world, and to the deepest yearnings of his personal world.

c) Agreeing with Nietzsche (whilst challenging him)

But this is to move ahead too quickly, because the Nietzschean legacy places more primary challenges against Christian theology. These challenges are very different to the 'scientific' concern over 'soul', and are potentially far more damaging. We could frame the challenges as questions. Can Christianity theology defend itself against the charge that by being other-worldly, it is poorly equipped to express an ethic for the present? Or can it defend against the charge that being body-hating, it is unable to accept emotions as goods?

It is premature to attempt an answer to these charges without the investigation of Part Two, but we can certainly form the outline of an answer, beginning with a recollection of the scenarios I began with:

(Tears in the kitchen:) "Let's bandage it, and then I'll kiss it better."

(One friend to another:) "You make me so mad I could hit you!"

(or perhaps instead:) "Let's make love."

(At the market:) "I must have it! How much do you want?"

(In an office:) "She'll pay—I'll destroy her."

Under Kant's categorical imperative, the attempt would be made to side-step the emotive component of these scenarios. C.S. Lewis makes the Kantian sidestep all the more apparent when he discusses a theological tension in this further 'scenario':

(In a Psalm:) "More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb."

The Psalmist is not difficult to comprehend, says C.S. Lewis, if the gold and honey were being compared to God's mercies, or to his attributes, or to his visitations. But instead, the comparison is to 'statutes' and 'decrees'—in fact, to the entire Pentateuchal law. In the same Psalm, these "rejoice the heart" (Ps. 19:8).

This was at first to me very mysterious. "Thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery"—I can understand that a man can, and must, respect these 'statutes', and try to obey them, and assent to them in his heart. But it is very hard to find how they could be, so to speak, delicious, how they exhilarate. If this is difficult at any time, it is doubly so when obedience to either is opposed to some strong, and perhaps *in itself* innocent, desire. A man held back by his unfortunate previous marriage to some lunatic or criminal who never dies from some woman whom he faithfully loves, or a hungry man left alone, without money, in a shop filled with the smell and sight of new bread, roasting coffee, or fresh strawberries—can these find the prohibitions of adultery or of theft at all like honey? They may obey, they may still respect

the 'statute'. But surely it could be more aptly compared to the dentist's forceps or the front line than to anything enjoyable and sweet.²²⁹

So on one hand, passion is somehow unpleasantly restrained by Law. But on the other hand, Law can be enthusiastically celebrated. Putting this tension to a respected Christian scholar, Lewis is told how the 'pleasure' was that of obedience, of a good conscience—of the 'smile', as it were, upon Duty's face. But this Kantian interpretation will not suffice for Lewis. "The difficulty is that the Psalmists never seem to me to say anything very like this." Karl Barth has also noticed the same difficulty—evidenced, interestingly enough, also within the Psalms. Aims, and desires, of the will are not

to be summarily discredited and set aside. And when one of the widespread and constantly re-emerging moral systems—hedonism, utilitarianism or eudæmonism, the so-called ethics of value—tries to use these natural aims as a basis for its presentation of the ethical, Christian ethics must be careful not to adopt at once towards this system the well known and purely negative attitude of Kant and the Kantians. Where the obligatory is to be understood as the content of the divine command, we cannot refuse absolutely to interpret it also as that which is supremely pleasing and useful and valuable. That "he shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Ps. 37:4), "upholding thee as thou desirest," and that He does this by giving us His command—this is also true in its own place and sense, and it must be stated, and justice must be done to it, in Christian ethics.²³⁰

Lewis will go on to suggest (in a questionable Platonic phrase) that the Psalmist uses "the language of a man ravished by a moral beauty."²³¹ The beauty is of a kind of order revealed to the Psalmist in the extensive material of the Pentateuch. This 'ravishment' "involved exact and loving conformity to an intricate pattern"²³²—an intricacy seen within and across the law, as reflected by the Psalmist's own intricate poetry (with Lewis now considering the long acrostic Psalm 119).

It would appear that in some fundamental way, Lewis, Barth and the Psalmists agree with Nietzsche against Kant. All have a vision of emotion as somehow integral to evaluative judgments. Even Kant is against himself, positing 'sympathy' (like our "let's bandage it ...") as self-evidentially 'reasonable' to the hardened scoundrel. Solomon even corrects Nietzsche at this point, approving that no 'hydraulic model' or evasion of emotion is evident in early Christianity. This approval seems to be Solomon's one and only point of agreement with early Christianity:

²²⁹ C.S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms* (London: Fount; HarperCollins, 1958), 47, as for quotation following.

²³⁰ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics Vol. 2: The Doctrine of God (second half-volume)* tr. G.W. Bromiley, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957), 650.

²³¹ Lewis, 51.

²³² *Ibid.*, 50.

Nietzsche objects to the biblical teaching that a man is responsible not only for what he does but for what he ‘feels’ as well. Nietzsche argues that this thesis is unintelligible; but here, for once, we must violently disagree with him and defend an insight of Christian psychology that has too long been lost under the metaphysics of its theology.²³³

Even so famous a biblical passage as Galatians 5:19-22 contrasts lust, jealousy, anger and envy (and more) against love, joy, peace, kindness and faithfulness (among others). Only the most extreme rationalist could hold that these last are free of affection. Nietzscheans might attempt to sustain the view that they are emaciated or ‘emasculated’. Such attempts proceed either by fiat or, as we have seen, by special pleading (a strategy of some importance to sustain the ‘unmasking’ of Christianity).²³⁴ But presumably, Psalmists would find these attempts to be unintelligible at best, and at worst bombastic (or in their terms, the ‘mockery’ of ‘scoffers’).

It appears *prima facie* that there is a robust theological account of the emotions. We shall see how the ‘intoxications’ of Christian theology certainly draw upon a vision of an eschatological world, which brings a renewed estimate of its importance and preciousness of ‘this’ world’s goods, and from which is derived a different kind of deep love for the body and its responses to the ‘world’. The life-affirming impulses of Christianity that Nietzsche seeks to neutralise by special pleading, might rather prove constitutive to Christian theology’s approach to ‘this’ world.

Christian ethics continues to embrace these ‘intoxications’ in the moral field, such as food *enjoyed* in *good faith* with shopkeepers, or sexual enjoyment actually *enhanced* by *good faith* with a spouse. These delights can even touch Lewis’s hungry man in the bread shop, and the person contemplating illicit romance. This willingness for delighted ‘intoxication’ leaves Christian theology unimpressed by Enlightenment ethics, for reasons similar to Nietzsche’s, thus constituting a point of deep agreement with Nietzsche. (There is also an agreement here with Nietzschean epistemology: true knowledge is subjective, emotion-threaded knowledge.) But disagreement with Nietzschean naturalism also follows: Christian theology’s delighted ‘intoxications’, rather than denying the body or this-worldly life, will challenge the *emaciation* inherent to the disorder of Nietzsche’s chaotic ‘system’.

As we have seen, conceptions of ‘order’ arouse extreme suspicion and contempt among Nietzscheans.²³⁵ We will postpone our engagement, other than to recall Nietzsche’s

²³³ Solomon, *Passions*, 132 n†.

²³⁴ See above, 61.

²³⁵ See on Nussbaum above, 59. Also see above (56, n.186) for the kind of order to which Nietzsche objects.

alternative hierarchical order. This was an order inimical to justice, and therefore certainly to any project such as Nussbaum's. In this respect Barth went on to observe the point of Kant's project:

On the other hand, we have to admit that Kant has expressed the essential concern of Christian ethics by pointing out that of itself the concept of what is pleasing and useful and valuable does not give us the concept of what is obligatory.²³⁶

Without putting too fine a point on it, this leaves Kant able to sustain a form of justice. Despite Nietzsche's mockery of ordered and just societies, a moment of reflection on social ethics leaves us unwilling to cast aside justice.

d) 'The logic of love': a multivalent concept

Christian theology is able to respond to Kantian and Nietzschean legacies by making sense of the relationship between emotion and ethics in a 'logic of love'. This will become apparent in the theological investigation of Part Two. Throughout the thesis, I will be using 'logic of love' in two broad senses. Within each broad sense are two complementary facets. To make this multivalence clearer, I will numerically list the two senses and their complementary facets:

1. The first broad sense concerns *a dipolar relationship between object and subject*. Various 'objects' reside in the moral field, and human subjects respond to them in love. That is, given the existence of a pluriform 'moral field', 'love' is a set of evaluative responses (such as desire, interest, care, concern and attraction) to all of its goods. Hence love is the friend of moral knowledge. I will use the following two points to show how the dipolar relationship delivers a 'logic of love' that assists moral knowledge.
 - a) Ontologically grounding our knowledge of the moral field are the many telic and generic relationships that constitute it.²³⁷ The intricate order of this field is the true substance of deliberative logic, and various goods intrinsic to this field *elicit* our love. Love *responds* to the goods of the moral field, and does not spring *de novo* from humanity. Indeed whether or not these goods are existentially apprehended in love, they remain present as goods. (It is on this kind of basis that Christian theology can defend Kant's commitment to justice, since justice is in part the recognition of a real ordering that exists irrespective of anybody's loves. To defend

²³⁶ Barth, 650.

²³⁷ My indebtedness to Oliver O'Donovan for this conception and for what follows will be noted as the thesis develops.

justice is to commend this order, possibly in the face of indifference to it.) Since love is a series of responses to a plethora of goods, it becomes appropriate to describe love as having its own ‘logic’. This is a logic that pertains to the already existing order of the moral field, rather than being a logic of the lover’s own making. The ‘logic of love’ is, in this sense, a reference to love’s basis in an order that precedes the lover’s love of this order. We might summarise the objective and ontological basis of love by saying that *love has an ordinant logic*.

b) But if moral order is ontologically prior to love, it follows that love is an existentially prior element in deliberative logic. That is, deliberative logic proceeds strongly in reference to what is loved, since love is among the first experiential moments of moral awareness. Central to any deliberative ‘logic’ are various ‘loves’ toward various goods in the moral field. These loves are always present, even if covert, and are integral to our naming of various ‘goods’ as ‘good’. In this sense, then, the ‘logic’ of our deliberation is inescapably imbued with these loves. (It is on this kind of basis that Christian theology can reject, like Nietzsche, Kant’s dichotomy of ethics and emotion. Thus theological ethics takes deliberative logic to be subjective to a degree; it further asserts that *all* deliberative logic is subjective in this way, despite protestations such as Kant’s to the contrary.) We might summarise this epistemological and subjective element of love by saying that *deliberative logic has its love(s)*, but noting how in this phrase, the referent for ‘logic’ has changed. Whereas in point (a) ‘logic’ alluded to the order of the moral field, in point (b) the ‘logic’ on view is our deliberative, epistemic discovery of the moral field. The process of this discovery is deeply coloured, tinged and touched by love—and it cannot be any other way, if love is indeed the response to the many goods of the moral field.

2. But theological investigation uncovers the necessity to understand ‘the logic of love’ in a second broad sense. Human love is not congruent to those goods that should rightly elicit love; which is to say, human love is ‘disordered’. (In mentioning ‘indifference’ to justice,²³⁸ I alluded briefly to such incongruence.) The promise of the gospel includes a divine ‘reordering’, by the Spirit, of love. In this second broad sense, then, I will tell of *a ‘logic’, or grammar, of reordered love*. Again, two complementary facets are envisaged to form a ‘theologic’ of grace and command:

²³⁸ See above, 71.

- a) There is a *logic of love poured in*. In theological understanding, humans are helpless to reorder their own loves. The work of divine reordering is adventitious; the Spirit's approach is, to us, like wind. Yet it is possible theologically to examine some means of this divine approach—such as, for example, divine revelation (e.g. OT laws, or the teachings of Christ), which highlights goods within the moral field that were previously veiled to us. The adventitious work of the Spirit is in concert with this revelation, to elicit our love towards those goods that we were formerly indifferent towards (or worse).
- b) However though adventitious, this reordering is accessible to all because a constitutive element of divine reordering is an invitation (by command) for us to participate in the reordering. This is a *logic of love commended*. The love that is commended to us includes the loving worship of God; the enjoyment of the neighbour and an embrace of their beauty; and the curtailment or adjustment of loves (and behaviours) that are inimical to the loved persons.

When a given 'logic of love' is mentioned in the thesis, context should make the relevant sense clear. I will only refer the reader back to this section occasionally.



We have now seen an Enlightenment approach and a Nietzschean approach to the relationship between ethics and emotion, including their limitations. Kant's respect for emotion threatens his view that emotions have no place in ethics; and Nietzsche's celebration of the excellences intrinsic to emotion requires a caste society ranked by excellence, irrespective of justice. In their alliance with Nietzsche, Solomon and Nussbaum do not engage with this limitation.

I have asserted that a theological account of the emotions embraces delighted 'intoxications' in a point of deep agreement with Nietzsche. The agreement is epistemic and ethical: emotions are required, somehow, for knowledge and for ethics. But I have further asserted that Nietzsche's chaotic 'system' is emaciated in a way that Christian theology will challenge (so retaining Kant's commitment to justice). The theological investigation of Part Two will discern the 'logic of love' that addresses these matters.

PART II: THEOLOGICAL RESOURCES FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEM

Having seen two modern approaches to the relationship between ethics and emotion, the investigation of this part will establish a theological approach, by reference to major texts in four theologians: Augustine of Hippo, Thomas Aquinas, John Calvin and Søren Kierkegaard.

In the first instance, Augustine is commended to our investigation by the rejection of him in Nussbaum and Solomon. The rejections differ. Solomon finds his approach to emotion pusillanimous. Nussbaum appreciates a depth of engagement in his love, but rejects it as ‘other worldly’ and ‘body hating’.

But which of these different objections (if either) is correct? Why should Augustine be chosen in this way, in discussions of emotion? Opening Augustine’s corpus almost anywhere, his deep emotional literacy becomes immediately apparent. He continually attempts to understand his own emotional life in reference to his ever-increasing scriptural and theological understanding. This aspect of his prodigious corpus commends him, *prima facie*, to my investigation.

The investigation quickly yields rich rewards. There is an extended engagement with Stoicism (which Nussbaum saw); and his early and late engagements serendipitously develop an interesting dialectic. The early Manichean views he opposes locate evil primordially in the body and its desires, while in later Pelagian views, control of desire is unproblematic and evil merely a dysfunction. His balanced and rich theological alternative to these two accounts is, in part, a fortuitous outcome of their polarity.

Subsequent and secondary literature makes apparent the inestimable influence of this body of theological thought about emotion. Augustine is foundational to this thesis. I have chosen the other three theologians because they develop Augustine in various ways.

Aquinas, in an Aristotelian milieu, set himself an interesting question. What if both Aristotelian science and Augustinian theology are true? The result, perhaps to the amazement of Aristotelian onlookers, became a sophisticated theological account of ethical behaviour that completed Augustine’s broad brushstrokes in fine detail. Clearly, my investigation could not afford to ignore this detail. Aquinas is most strikingly insightful

about the extent to which our emotions *respond to* and so *shed light upon* our (possibly inarticulate) moral commitments. In our emotions, we discover what we construe to be good.

But we also experience moments of intense emotion with highly unethical results. I recount one such moment in my own life. This recalls another facet of Augustine's thought, a melancholic aspect, which was amplified by John Calvin. Calvin's engagement with some version of Aquinas caused him to think it necessary to give voice again to this other Augustinian emphasis. It is melancholy reading, yet satisfying, given the depth of Calvin's diagnosis. And even Calvin retains the same hopes as powered Augustine; there is no Manicheism here.

I turn to Kierkegaard because of his Augustinian diagnosis of modernity. I make no judgment over the degree to which Kierkegaard thought himself an Augustinian, although obviously, he was no Sartrean existentialist. The more interesting point in Kierkegaard is that he radically challenges the 'objectivity' of the Enlightenment in a way that is deeply consonant with Augustine's understanding of the emotions in their relation to the world. But this celebration of subjectivity (properly understood) also equips Kierkegaard to refute Nietzsche—and on the grounds of Nietzsche's choosing. (We can only wish they had lived at the same time.)

To these four—the one foundational, the other three developing his approach—I will now turn, to discern theology's *logic of love*. I will finally draw upon all four of these thinkers to propose a *theological theory of virtue* as a promising means of summarising the relationship between ethics and emotion.



Chapter IV: Treasures of Augustine's Heart

We need not at present give a careful and copious exposition of the doctrine of Scripture, the sum of Christian knowledge, regarding these passions. It subjects the mind itself to God, that He may rule and aid it, and the passions, again, to the mind, to moderate and bridle them, and turn them to righteous uses. In our ethics, we do not so much inquire whether a pious soul is angry, as why he is angry; not whether he is sad, but what is the cause of his sadness; not whether he fears, but what he fears. For I am not aware that any right thinking person would find fault with anger at a wrongdoer which seeks his amendment, or with sadness which intends relief to the suffering, or with fear lest one in danger be destroyed.²³⁹

We have seen representatives of the Nietzschean approach use Augustine as a foil for their rejection of theology's approach to ethics and emotion. In the five subsections of this chapter, I will show the extent of Augustine's deep emotional literacy, since for Augustine, love is somehow central to an account of ethics. In this chapter, I will describe Augustine's 'logic of love', and its centrality to an account of ethics, as follows.

Love is fundamental to our knowledge and behaviour (Section One); but love is disordered by voracity and 'selective sight' (Section Two). But this conception of disorder does not constitute a hatred of the body or of bodily life (Section Three); indeed, love for human others is integral to Augustine's account of love for God (Section Four). Reordered love is a divine gift, formed in part by our willing participation in the divinely ordered moral field (Section Five). I will now pause to outline these sections in slightly more detail.

In Section One I describe how for Augustine, people are constituted in being, knowledge and love, so that all knowledge has affective tones. The soul unifies mind and body, and the soul is directed by its loves. The soul then directs behaviour accordingly. 'Freedom' is therefore contingent upon the affections of the soul (where 'affection' goes beyond the bodily disturbances of emotion). I also outline Augustine's attack upon Stoic attempts to eliminate emotional 'disturbances'.

Section Two outlines the disordering of love. Voracity and selective sight cause plenitude to be perceived as scarcity, when some goods are loved to the exclusion of others. Augustine names the hegemonic claims of voracious love as 'concupiscence', and shows how disordered love generates both pride and despair. Humanity's helpless bondage is revealed in Christ's death for sin, but right responses to God and to the abundant moral field are secured by the pneumatological reorientation of love. Throughout, I introduce Manichean

²³⁹ Augustine, *The City of God Against the Pagans* (413-25), tr. R.W. Dyson, *Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought* edition, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 365 (IX.5). This translation of *De civ. Dei* is used throughout unless otherwise indicated.

and Pelagian opponents, against whose opposing accounts of evil (as, respectively, primordium and dysfunction) Augustine forges his account of evil as the privation of good.

In Section Three I will detail Augustine's high view of the body, and I will clarify Augustine's treatment of marital 'concupiscence'. I show that Nussbaum is mistaken about Augustine's 'hatred' of the body; rather, Augustine's condemnation of hegemonic hungry love threatens her own system and highlights Nietzschean incomprehension of contented love. She observes Augustine's lack of confidence in human choice, but fails to engage his melancholy reasons: that under voracity and selective sight, choice-making brings cruelty and chaos. Ironically, Augustine seems much more interested in using *concupiscentia* to describe *the will to power*.

In Section Four, I address the charge that Augustinian theology does not need human others. Grounds for this might reside in the impassibility of God (if humans are *imago dei*); or in Augustine's unfortunate early formulation that people may be used (*uti*) for the enjoyment (*frui*) of God; or in the eudaemonist substructure of his thought. But in each case, I offer a 'thick' theological defence against the charge. Humanity is to be 'enjoyed in God'; and Augustine's strenuous campaigns against social evils evidence his living according to this view.

I examine reordered love in Section Five. It connotes worship of God, enjoyment of neighbour, and the exclusion of certain behaviours toward those loved. In a logic of 'love poured in', affections cannot be commanded. The Spirit pours a love for God into the human heart, and God's 'embrace' reorders our loves. Though not ours to control, participation is accessible in a logic of 'love commended', where love for God stretches our horizons, and requires the curtailment of voracious selective sight. I then recount some 'aspects' of the agent's loving participation in moral field, and suggest that the Psalmist's love of 'the Law' is a delight in instruction about the aspects of love. I finally suggest that Augustine's project reflects Christ's 'treasures of the heart'.

Before turning to these sections, a word is required on the chronological perspective that must inform any discussion of Augustine, since the intellectual developments of his long life are evident throughout his prodigious corpus. In this respect, Peter Brown's biography²⁴⁰ remains a work of major importance, since it maps the changes in Augustine's thought.

²⁴⁰ Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (London: Faber, 1967). A recent new edition is Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography (A New Edition with an Epilogue)* (London: Faber, 2000). In the citations from Brown which follow in this thesis, the second pagination in brackets refers to the new edition.

Augustine's vocation shapes him, as the theoretician without responsibilities becomes the overseer with souls at stake. His discourse is shaped by his conflicts, with the late fourth-century threat from gnostic Manichean speculations giving way to the harsh, urgent imperatives of Julian and the Pelagians during Augustine's later years in the second and third decades of the fifth century. Scripture, increasingly regarded by him as normative, gradually supplants some habits of his philosophical heritage. After the self-confessed sexual obsession of his youth, the normal physical changes of ageing seem to cast different lights. And this life spans an epic and cataclysmic backdrop, as the late Roman empire moves inexorably from its Indian summer during Augustine's youth, to the first of its death-throes in his old age. In the topic areas of interest to us, we can easily see a movement from preoccupation with the metaphysics of human essence, toward more experiential and pastoral emphases.

Our investigation will require the use of texts both early and late, and Brown's framework will largely be assumed.²⁴¹ It would only distract us to discuss each *sitz im leben* or to defend Brown's history. However, Brown's biography has recently been re-released,²⁴² with an epilogue by the author that takes into account over fifty major new Augustinian documents (the Divjak letters and the Dolbeau sermons), all lost since the middle ages but rediscovered recently. The discoveries have dramatically enhanced Augustine scholarship, and have caused Brown radically to revise his picture of a harsh older Augustine in decline. It will sometimes become appropriate to mention Brown's mature thought.

1. Epistemology and the affections

In this section I will describe how for Augustine, people are constituted in being, knowledge and love, so that all knowledge has affective tones. The soul unifies mind and body, and the soul is directed by its loves. The soul then directs behaviour accordingly. 'Freedom' is therefore contingent upon the affections of the soul (where 'affection' goes beyond the bodily disturbances of emotion). I also outline Augustine's attack upon Stoic attempts to eliminate emotional 'disturbances'.

²⁴¹ Furthermore, to assist in placing the texts chronologically, Brown's dating will appear in brackets after the name of the text in its first citation. These are drawn from the chronological tables in Brown, *Augustine*, 16, 74, 184, 282, 378 (3, 64, 178, 280, 380). But *circa* is always to be understood, given comments in Brown, *Augustine (new edn.)*, viii.

²⁴² See above, n.240.

a) The 'weight' of the soul

As a starting point, we need to notice the striking way that 'love' is for Augustine an essential constituent of being human. Love directs the soul, so metaphorically speaking, the soul can be said to have 'weight'.

Augustine's statement regarding the importance of emotions, quoted at the start of the chapter,²⁴³ is clear enough. It parallels modern 'cognitive' views, and describes how Christian theology ("our ethics") is not against emotion *per se*. The statement occurs in the sprawling engagement with Stoics (and Platonists) of *De civitate Dei*, during which Augustine methodically distances himself from Stoicism. Though significant in its own right, the statement builds toward something even more fundamental. A broad consensus in ancient philosophy held that philosophy investigates the physical, the logical and the ethical (XI.25-28). Augustine agrees, then goes much further, to find the very deepest levels of human being.

If the universe comprises the physical, the logical and the ethical, then each person incarnates three personal correlates: being, knowledge and love. People exist, know, and love; and these are the most properly basic attributes of humanity. "In our present state, we believe that we possess these three things—being, knowledge and love—not on the testimony of others, but because we ourselves are aware of their presence, and because we discern them with our most truthful inner vision."²⁴⁴ In an amusing pre-Cartesian twist, Augustine toys with the Academics along lines that 'even if I am mistaken, therefore I am!'

But the real point concerns Augustine's correlation of 'love' with ethical existence. Ethics concerns a form of *love*. Humanity's deep care about right and wrong, and people's insistence upon various acts, signal a fundamental human capacity *to love*. Augustine does not mean that people necessarily love other people. Rather, each person simply has the capacity for delight, or love, directed toward various things. By 'love', Augustine has in mind a range of interested responses (including desire, care, concern, attraction, lust, etc.); and he will have much to say about the 'various things' known and loved (or not loved). The primary point, though, is that ethics derives from this human given.

Love is formally contingent upon knowledge: to love something, it must first be known. But materially, there is no knowing *without* love. *Our knowledge relationship to the world is*

²⁴³ See above, 75.

²⁴⁴ Augustine, 488 (XI.28).

irreducibly touched or imbued or tinged, with love. That *deliberative logic has its love(s)* is true for all humanity, whether Christian or pagan.

Moreover, love tends toward a *telos*. Were humanity cattle, “we should love the carnal and sensual life, and this would be our sufficient good”. Just as a stone is “carried by its weight wherever it is carried,” so also “the soul is carried by its love.”²⁴⁵ Though an odd image for moderns, ancients meant by this ‘weight’ “a momentum by which each part of the universe sought out its place of rest, with the mute insistence of a homing pigeon seeking to regain its nest”.²⁴⁶

If the self was proper ‘gravity’ for this ‘weight’, then people would be “blessed” when their love terminated upon themselves and all would be well. But such blessing is so often tried and found wanting, that Augustine suspects the proper ‘gravity’ of our love to have lain elsewhere all along. “[O]ur nature has God as the author of its being, [so] we must beyond doubt have Him as our teacher, that we may be truly wise; and Him also to bestow spiritual sweetness upon us, that we may be blessed indeed.”²⁴⁷ This proper *telos* becomes the proper criterion for evaluating various loves.

b) The soul as a rallying point

It is worth pausing to note an aspect of Augustine’s understanding of the soul.

His statement on emotion²⁴⁸ occurs in a strange context. To erode pagan confidence in the worship of demons as divine-human intermediaries, Augustine proceeds by sparring with the demonology of the Platonist Apuleius. Augustine’s own demonology is unimportant here, because the Apuleian demon functions as an *anthropological counterfactual*, to show what constitutes true humanity. The truly human is then utilised as a ‘counter-counterfactual’ to debunk the worship of these Apuleian demons. Our interest here is in Augustine’s anthropological claim.

In Apuleius’ account, demons have a powerful ethereal ‘body’ and a rational mind; but their mind is tossed upon a sea of passion, unbridled by virtue (cf. VIII.14-17 and IX.3, 6). What constitutes the crucial difference between a demon and a human? The counterfactual point supplied by this demon is relatively straightforward.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 487 (XI.28).

²⁴⁶ Brown, *Augustine (new edn.)*, 512. Interestingly, Brown describes how this is the same ‘weight’ of ‘glory’ which God places into hearts (2 Cor. 4:7), making Christians “the *heavy people*, held on course, despite the high winds of the world, by the gathering momentum of a ‘gravity of love’.”

²⁴⁷ Augustine, 483 (XI.25).

²⁴⁸ See above, 75.

Their minds, then, are tossed upon a sea, as Apuleius puts it; nor have they in any part of their souls the truth and virtue by which such turbulent and depraved passions might be repulsed.²⁴⁹

Their mind, as Apuleius says, is a sea tossed with tempest, having no rallying point of truth or virtue in their soul from which they can resist their turbulent and depraved emotions.²⁵⁰

[I]psius quoque mentis, ut iste appellauit, salu fluctuant, nec in ueritate atque uirtute, qua turbulentis et prauis affectionibus repugnatur, ex ulla animi parte consunt.²⁵¹

Humans *do* possess this ‘rallying point’. The human mind and soul are in league with the direction of *affectatio* (for *adfectatio*).²⁵² The body is the locus of action for the soul’s *adfectiones*—but the unitive element between mind and body, is the soul (elsewhere called ‘the spouse’ of the body.²⁵³) The storminess of (what we call) ‘emotion’, and the commitments of the mind, are recursive in their relation. This recursion takes place ‘at’ the ‘rallying point’, the soul—which, we recall, has a ‘weight’ of love. The soul brings together its mind and body, and is directed in this by its loves, and action results.

But ‘free will’ is bonded, because ‘freedom’ is contingent upon what is loved and hated. Even a great ruler cannot be said to be free if “they lay waste their own souls by their greater licence in wickedness”. The tyrant’s subjects may be freer, since “the good man is free even if he is a slave, whereas the bad man is a slave even if he reigns: a slave, not to one man, but, what is worse, to as many masters as he has vices.”²⁵⁴ This reflects both ancient wisdom and the teaching of Scripture (here, 2 Pt. 2:19, where “people are slaves to whatever masters them”; cf. 1 Cor. 6:12.)

Hence the soul unifies the weight of love and the actions of the body, and the soul is constrained by whatever is loved.

c) Stoic perversity

But Augustine’s view runs counter to contemporary Stoic accounts, which rather sought to deny love as essential to the soul.

²⁴⁹ Augustine, 361 (IX.3).

²⁵⁰ Augustine, *The City of God* (413-25), ed. Philip Schaff, tr. Marcus Dods, *NPNF 1*, including *On Christian Doctrine*, vol. II (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988; originally published New York, 1886), 167 (IX.3).

²⁵¹ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei Contra Paganos (Vol. I)* ed. J.E.C. Welldon, (London: SPCK, 1924), 373.

²⁵² Dods’ ‘emotions’ more likely picks up on the traditional English sense of ‘turbulence’ or ‘commotion’, rather than our modern value-neutral ‘feeling’.

²⁵³ See further below, 98.

²⁵⁴ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 147 (IV.3).

Stoic views parallel other ancient received wisdom (IX.4), where an uncontroversial consensus held that “the mind is master of all [emotional] disturbances, and, by withholding its consent from them and resisting them, exercises a reign of virtue.”²⁵⁵ (‘Disturb’ functions here as a technical term, around which ancient discussions of ‘passion’, or ‘emotion’, were organised and conducted.²⁵⁶) The *apologia* for the Christian Scriptures follows straightforwardly. “It subjects the mind itself to God, that He may rule and aid it, and the passions, again, to the mind, to moderate and bridle them, and turn them to righteous uses.”²⁵⁷ The Scriptures do for the mind what the mind does for the body. This *apologia* modifies the ancient consensus without upsetting it—until Augustine suddenly ‘ambushes’ Stoicism. When Stoics screen out even compassion from the disturbance-free-zone of their mind, they become emotionally *and ethically* perverse.

[W]hat is compassion but a kind of fellow feeling in our hearts for the misery of another which compels us to help him if we can? This impulse is the servant of right reason when compassion is displayed in such a way as to preserve righteousness, as when alms are distributed to the needy or forgiveness extended to the penitent. ... [But] the Stoics are not ashamed to number [compassion] among the vices ...²⁵⁸

The Stoic denies the soul’s ‘weight’ of love. By deploying strategies to eliminate ‘disturbance’, he curtails love, including what Augustine will later evaluate as ‘right love’. (A scouring *ad hominem* attack amusingly describes a Stoic facing shipwreck. Though free from ‘disturbance’ over the fate of fellow-passengers, he remains highly ‘disturbed’, since his love terminated upon his own most valuable self.) Augustine is heavily opposed to ancient denigration of ‘disturbance’, and elsewhere he wrests ‘disturbance’ away from philosophers into the realm of normalcy. Desire, joy, fear and grief are not problematic *per se*, even if they are depressingly and regularly corruptible:

A righteous will, then, is a good love; and a perverted will is an evil love. Therefore, love striving to possess what it loves is desire; love possessing and enjoying what it loves is joy; love fleeing what it is adverse to is fear; and love undergoing such adversity when it occurs is grief. Accordingly, these feelings [pronominal: *ista*] are bad if the love is bad, and good if it is good.²⁵⁹

d) *Emotion, passion, affection*

Augustine’s disagreement with Stoicism demonstrates his thought about the integral nature of love for human beings. But for moderns, his discussion can be obscured by the terms

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 365 (IX.4).

²⁵⁶ Augustine comments upon the relevant lexical field at the start of IX.3.

²⁵⁷ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 365 (IX.5). See full quotation above, 75.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 365-66 (IX.5).

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 592 (XIV.7). In this quotation, ‘good’ and ‘bad’ rely upon a prior scriptural excursus, where the love of violence, money or ‘the world’ is contrasted to love for the Father.

‘emotion’, ‘passion’ and ‘affection’. We learn more about Augustine’s position by clarifying his use of them. (This clarification will partially vindicate Dixon’s insights. To reprise Dixon’s basic points, ‘passion’ and ‘affection’ were overthrown by the late-modern term ‘emotion’; and Solomon is mistaken to speak only of ‘passion’ as ‘moving’ us without reference to ‘affection’.²⁶⁰)

Augustine ends XIV.5 by countering the Platonists:

[I]t is not only under the influence of the flesh that the soul experiences desire, fear, joy and sorrow; it can also be disturbed by such emotions arising from within itself.²⁶¹

Unde etiam illis fatentibus non ex carne tantum adficitur anima, ut cupiat metuat, laetetur aegrescat, uerum etiam ex se ipsa his potest motibus agitari.²⁶²

Dyson’s use of ‘emotion’ here for *motus* is hardly controversial. Traditional English usage²⁶³ uses ‘emotion’ to describe inner and outer ‘stirrings’ or ‘movements’. Thus ‘emotion’ appropriately renders ancient ‘disturbance’; and Augustine uses *motus* and *perturbatio* synonymously in this connection. (Even if they were not synonymous for the philosophical schools, Augustine repeatedly brushes aside any distinctions.) The terms are value-neutral; but Augustine has more to say.

What is important here is the quality of a man’s will. For if the will is perverse, the emotions [*motus*] will be perverse; but if it is righteous, the emotions [pronominally antecedent to verb *erunt*] will not only be blameless but praiseworthy.²⁶⁴

Augustine begins to describe a *fundamental shift* in these ‘motions’—not an ontological change, but *a change in how they are regarded, depending upon the orientation of the will (voluntas)*. He continues, “The will is engaged in all of them; indeed, they are no more than acts of the will.” If moderns think Augustine only conceives a cold, calculating ‘will’, they forget how *love* integrates human being: the soul that ‘rallies’ mind and emotion is not neutral, but has a ‘weight’ of love. Indeed, Solomon’s ‘constitutive judgments’ almost seem reliant upon Augustine’s account:

For what is desire and joy but an act of the will in agreement with what we wish for? And what is fear and grief but an act of will in disagreement with what we do not wish for? When this agreement manifests itself as the pursuit of what we wish for, it is called desire; and when it manifests itself as enjoyment of what we wish for, it is joy. By the same token, when we

²⁶⁰ Dixon, 303.

²⁶¹ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 590 (XIV.5).

²⁶² Augustine, *De Civitate Dei Contra Paganos (Vol. II)* ed. J.E.C. Welldon, (London: SPCK, 1924), 90 (XIV.5).

²⁶³ OED s.v. “emotion”.

²⁶⁴ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 590 (XIV.6).

disagree with something that we do not wish to happen, such an act of will is fear; but when we disagree with something which happens against our will, that act of will is grief.²⁶⁵

Augustine seeks to show that these ‘motions’ cannot properly be understood apart from the ‘ethical commitments’, or better the ‘loves’, that govern them:

And, universally, as man’s will is attracted or repelled by the variety of things which are pursued or avoided, so it changes and turns into emotions [*adfectus*] of one kind or the other.²⁶⁶

Et omnino pro uarietate rerum, quae adpetuntur adque fugiuntur, sicut adlicitur uel offenditur uoluntas hominis, ita in hos uel illos *adfectus* mutatur et uertitur.²⁶⁷

And generally in respect of all that we seek or shun, as a man’s will is attracted or repelled, so it is changed and turned into these different affections.²⁶⁸

Augustine is doing his utmost to signal a fundamental shift. *Something happens* when the will incorporates these ‘motions’—they become *affections*.²⁶⁹ Although Augustine is not particularly interested in the differences between various *motus*, his distinction between *motus* and *adfectus* is highly important. Human ‘disturbances’ become so completely fused within the loves of the soul as to become something we can call ‘affections’. These ‘affections’ are ‘motions’ that help propel the will—‘mixtures’, somehow, of our primary love with the *motus* of our body. In the same way that being, thinking and loving comprise Augustine’s essential basics of humanity, so also are these *affections* central to human being. Affections are ‘ethico-emotional postures’ in the most indivisible sense of that admittedly clumsy label.

Like moderns, Augustine struggles at the edge of language. But unlike moderns, he realises that to denote these ‘ethico-emotional’ postures as mere ‘emotions’ (*motus*) is a significant loss. In using ‘emotion’ both for *motus* and *adfectus*, Dyson’s late modern translation has missed a crucial turn, and Dixon’s thesis shows why Dods’ older translation is straightforward by comparison.²⁷⁰ This is not to harangue Dyson over an otherwise excellent

²⁶⁵ Ibid. (XIV.6).

²⁶⁶ Ibid. (XIV.6).

²⁶⁷ Augustine, *De civ. Dei* (Welldon II), 90 (XIV.6).

²⁶⁸ Augustine, *De civ. Dei* (Dods), 266 (XIV.6).

²⁶⁹ The choice of the two verbs, their passive tense, and the *in* with accusative (“*in hos uel illos adfectus mutatur et uertitur*”) all seem to emphasise the point.

²⁷⁰ Indeed, there is further interesting affirmation of Dixon’s idea. William James’ epochal statement for modern ‘emotion’, published in 1884, is unlikely to have made much impact during the compilation of *A Latin Dictionary* (1896), where for entries under *adfectatio*, *adfectus*, *commotus*, *motus*, *passio*, *perturbatio* (and cognates), ‘emotion’ appears only once, under *motus*, and in the traditional sense we have already described (s.v. Charlton T. Lewis and C. Short, *A Latin Dictionary: Founded on the Andrew’s Edition of Freund’s Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1896), 65-67, 383, 1168-69, 1312, 1359-60).

translation, for English lexical stock is no fault of his. The point is simply that modern translations can easily confound this investigation. Consider another example:

Will, caution, gladness, then, are common to both good and evil men; and—to make the same point in different words—good and evil men alike feel desire, fear and joy. But the good feel these emotions in a good way, and the bad feel them in a bad way, just as the will of men may be righteous or perverse.²⁷¹

Proinde uolent, cauent gaudent et boni et mali; adque ut eadem aliis uerbis enuntiemus, cupiunt timent laetantur et boni et mali; sed illi bene, isti male, sicut hominibus seu recta seu peruersa uoluntas est.²⁷²

Although desire and will, fear and caution, joy and gladness reside in all, the pivotal clause is the distributive *sed illi bene, isti male*, quite precisely conveying how these are directed toward comparatively different ends given ‘righteousness’ or ‘perversity’. We might debate with Augustine over ‘righteousness’ or ‘perversity’, but the basic claim is framed with striking clarity: desire and will, fear and caution are fundamentally ethical.

However, the translator has thought it necessary to introduce ‘emotions’ and the threefold ‘feel’ for modern readers. Presumably, these psychological labels are intended as middle terms to make the thought intelligible. But the reverse might occur if moderns were to ask, against Augustine, “How can an *emotion* be *felt* in a way either ‘good’ or ‘bad’?” Once this question is put, Augustine’s point is overthrown, and an opportunity lost for Augustine to subvert our own value-free conception of emotion through his own understanding that these same experiences are actually ethically bound, and that our loves are integral to them. Dods’ version seems better (although the substitution of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ for ‘righteous’ and ‘perverse’ is perhaps a diminution):

So that good and bad men alike will, are cautious, and contented; or, to say the same thing in other words, good and bad men alike desire, fear, rejoice,

However less than thirty years later, Welldon’s note on *De civ. Dei* IX.4 explains how *adfectiones uel affectus* are “words indistinguishable in meaning, so that [Augustine] uses *adfectiones* alone immediately afterwards.” That is reasonable, of course; but he continues that “[i]f it is necessary to translate both, some words like ... ‘affects’ may perhaps be coined as an equivalent of *affectus*; but ‘emotions or motions’ would probably be near enough.” (Augustine, *De civ. Dei* (Welldon I), 374 n.2).

Certainly at IX.4 Augustine is himself content to loosely group *adfectiones uel affectus* along with *πάθη*, *perturbationes* and *passiones* under all ‘those motions of the soul’ (his *animi motibus*). This might seem completely to destroy our point made in reference to XIV.6, until it is remembered that in IX.4 Augustine is setting up the ‘ancient consensus’ we have already seen, from whose Stoic version he will so radically differ. Thus because this is the nature of Augustine’s argument at IX.4, his use of *adfectiones uel affectus* there neither confirms nor denies the point we are making about his use of it at XIV.6, at which point the argument has progressed far beyond the loose grouping of IX.4.

The main point is simply that the shift toward a late modern use of ‘emotion’ seems evident in Welldon’s easy substitution. His “probably ... near enough” does *not* seem to derive from Augustine’s reference to *animi motibus*; we are suggesting that it is “probably ... near enough” because of the early twentieth century *loss* of what constitutes an ‘affection’ (which are now, for Welldon, merely ‘affects’).

²⁷¹ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 596 (XIV.9).

²⁷² Augustine, *De civ. Dei* (Welldon II), 95 (XIV.9).

but the former in a good, the latter in a bad fashion, according as the will is right or wrong.²⁷³

A rigid semantic field is not being claimed for *adfectiones* in Augustine. A ‘turbulent and disordered affection’ (*turbulentis et prauis affectionibus*) is synonymous with a ‘passion’.²⁷⁴ Sustaining the point that both are more than *motus* or ‘emotion’ requires no rigid semantic distinction between ‘affection’ as good and ‘passion’ as evil; Dixon’s distinction along these lines applies conceptually in Augustine, but not semantically. The main point is that passion and affection are much more than *motus*, because they pertain to *ethically related* disturbance.²⁷⁵

Having now seen Augustine’s analytic basis for understanding the affections and their relation to knowledge and behaviour, we will turn to his account of the derangement of these affections. Passion and disordered affection reflect a ‘disordering’ of love.

2. The tragedy of disorder

In this section I will outline the disordering of love. I will show how voracity and ‘selective sight’ cause plenitude to be perceived as scarcity, when some goods are loved to the exclusion of others. Augustine names the hegemonic claims of voracious love as ‘concupiscence’, and shows how disordered love generates both pride and despair. Humanity’s helpless bondage is revealed in Christ’s death for sin, but right responses to God and to the abundant moral field are secured by the pneumatological reorientation of love. Throughout, I introduce Manichean and Pelagian opponents, against whose opposing accounts of evil (as, respectively, *primordium* and *dysfunction*) Augustine forges his account of evil as the privation of good.

a) A melancholy plenty: Confessiones

People respond in love to myriad created goods, with varying degrees of intensity. Such love is *disordered* when some goods are loved to the exclusion of others—most notably God, who is the greatest good. Absences and lacks such as this will form Augustine’s account of evil.

The narrative structure of the *Confessiones* states the problem poignantly. The background ‘canvas’ is alive with earthy blessings: fertile ground, good food, sexual enjoyment. Layered onto this are a network of social goods: a loving family, good schooling, fine

²⁷³ Augustine, *De civ. Dei* (Dods), 268 (XIV.8).

²⁷⁴ This phrase is from the quotation above, 80.

²⁷⁵ This is illustrated further in the parallel translation above, 80, where *adfectiones* are ‘turbulent and depraved’. By definition, the demons that have these do evil very heartily, so more than *motus* (or ‘emotion’) is automatically required for them.

rhetoric, the bustle of a city, friends, and spouses. The impression is not that these revolve around Augustine in a life of ostentatious privilege. Rather, all the little human figures in the story move about on a massive, richly woven tapestry of riches, benefits, excellences and goods.

Yet a deep melancholy prevails, since no character can properly appropriate these goods. Certainly they try. Augustine and his acquaintances seize so **voraciously** upon various of these goods, and so much to the exclusion of other excellences, that life is experienced by each character as a problem of *scarcity*.

An infant is “pale with envy” at his sibling on the breast. He “object[s] to a rival” finding life in this nourishment, “when the milk flows in such abundance from its source”.²⁷⁶ To dismiss this behaviour as a natural drive seriously misses the point. Like us, Augustine tolerates such behaviours, knowing that children will grow out of them. He also knows that he writes of this infant, and of his own infancy and childhood, from the perspective of adult voracity. Indeed this is the point: he can detect no turning point, no dividing line, when people cross into voracity. It colours every human and all relationships.

He also sees clearly where his infant self was wronged by others in this. The straightforward benefits of learning were eclipsed by grammar school teachers who laughed while beating him. When the good of learning is used by these same teachers to deride play as an evil, they exhibit **selective sight**: not only is one good (education) used to denigrate another (play)—these grown men forget their own versions of play (called ‘business’!). This selective sight is hypocritical. “Was the master who beat me himself very different from me? If he were worsted by a colleague in some petty argument, he would be convulsed with anger and envy, much more so than I was when a playmate beat me at a game of ball.”²⁷⁷ Even the educational process is marred by selective sight. The gods’ ethical corruption is side-stepped in Greek literature studies. “A man who has learnt the traditional rules of pronunciation, or teaches them to others, gives greater scandal if he breaks them by dropping the aitch from ‘human being’ than if he ... hates another human”.²⁷⁸

The boy Augustine cheats to win, yet hates to be cheated and is angered when found out.²⁷⁹ In this succinct collocation, externally viewed irrationality seems internally rational under

²⁷⁶ Augustine, *Confessions* (401), tr. R.S. Pine-Coffin, *Penguin Classics* edition, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961), 28 (I.7).

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 31 (I.9).

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 38, 39 (I.18).

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 40 (I.19).

voracity and selective sight. This forms the subject of his extended reflection on the theft of pears. “[O]f what I stole I already had plenty, and much better at that, and I had no wish to enjoy [them.] ... We took away an enormous quantity of pears, not to eat them ourselves, but simply to throw them to the pigs.”²⁸⁰ The scarcity of plenty, instantiated by enjoyment of theft and in grasping the forbidden, admits of another (selectively seen) love:

This was friendship of a most unfriendly sort, bewitching my mind in an inexplicable way. For the sake of a laugh, a little sport, I was glad to do harm and anxious to damage another; and that without thought of profit for myself or retaliation for injuries received! And all because we are ashamed to hold back when others say “Come on! Let’s do it!”²⁸¹

Yet friendship itself is not impugned by this; rather, the tragedy of this selective seeing is that friendship could have been had—was already had—without this theft. Indeed it cannot be overstated how emphatically Augustine defends the goods themselves. They are not made suspect by this voracity and selective sight. The pears “had beauty, because they were created by you, the good God”.²⁸² Even within and among this life, Augustine himself had being, sensation, pleasure, memory, verbal skill, friends, and the innate ability for effective self-preservation. “Should I not be grateful that so small a creature possessed such wonderful qualities? But they were all gifts from God ... His gifts are good and the sum of them all is my own self.”²⁸³ Augustine continues in thanks to God and in penitence for his ignorance of God at that time.

Thus opens Book V: “Accept my confessions, O Lord.”²⁸⁴ The more obtuse reader realises with a jolt that almost every section of every book has followed the same pattern. Augustine has continually erred, within this rich tapestry of plenty, by failing to see its plenitude and by responding with voracity to its perceived scarcity. The confession that closes almost every section thanks God for his bounteous modes of action at each time, offering repentance for never having seen it. These actual *Confessiones* form the grand substance of the work.

Renewal of perception after his conversion enables Augustine to see these isolated patches of so-called scarcity as the constituent elements of an entire moral field. The central paragraph of II.6²⁸⁵ puts the point forcefully. A plethora of goods each have their rightful

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 47 (II.4).

²⁸¹ Ibid., 52 (II.9).

²⁸² Ibid., 49 (II.6).

²⁸³ Ibid., 20 (I.20).

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 91 (V.1).

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 49-50.

appeal: beauty, power, sexual love, scientific enquiry, simplicity, justice, inactivity, generosity, acquisitiveness, safety, and even grief. When held aloft to God each finds in him their greater fulfilment and fuller exemplar. (Thus to turn away from God as Augustine always did is an “unchaste love” and a recourse to perverse, if unwitting, imitation of God.) Rather than some Platonic marginalising of these goods against the invisible excellence of God, the reverse occurs: by deeply knowing the good Creator of these goods, the entire moral field can be accessed with a powerful sense of its completeness and abundance. Voracity is no longer always required. The way is open to a new kind of love, perhaps called ‘contentment’. The logic parallels that of Christ, where to seek first God’s kingdom makes “all these things [to] be given to you as well” (Mt. 6:33, Lk. 12:31).

On this conception of the moral field, evil is “the removal of good until finally no good remains.”²⁸⁶ This deceptively simple conception is the outcome of Augustine’s agonising personal struggle with Manichean dualism, whose easy account of evil held certain substances in the world to be intrinsically foul.

(It is worth a short excursus to note what is meant by ‘Manicheism’, both in Augustine’s initial discussion of it, and subsequently. Manicheism was an ancient gnostic sect originating with the third-century Persian Mani [or Manes], who taught that everything originated from one of two chief principles: light and darkness, or good and evil. Augustine’s offhand comments in the *Confessiones* remain a serviceable guide to its main claims. Evil, on the Manichean account, is a “kind of substance, a shapeless, hideous mass, which might be solid ... the Manichees called it earth, or fine and rarefied like air. This they imagine as a kind of evil mind filtering through the substance they call earth.”²⁸⁷ Material existence comprises “two masses of good and evil”²⁸⁸ that are antagonistic and infinite, “the evil in a lesser and the good in a greater degree.”²⁸⁹ These materials also raged in conflict within each person, to the point that souls could themselves become materially and substantially corrupted.²⁹⁰ One antidote included a strict dietary regimen, since “particles of the true and supreme God were supposed to be imprisoned in ... fruit and could only be

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 63 (III.7).

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 104 (V.10).

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 106 (V.11).

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 104 (V.10).

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 135 (VII.2).

released by means of the stomach and teeth of one of the elect”, who “retch[ed] them up as he groaned in prayer.”²⁹¹)

(In Augustine’s subsequent writing, as in later theological usage, the term stands more generically for any radical dualism of good and evil, and for allied intellectual tendencies to decry aspects of material existence as inherently wrong or bad, usually in an anthropological connection. Elsewhere, Augustine describes a Manichean anthropology: that “man was formed by the prince of eternal darkness of a mixture of two natures which had ever existed—one good and the other evil.”²⁹² Thus in anthropological discussions, descriptions of any bodily process as irremediably evil, and not open to any ‘redemption’ other than by eradication of the body, would be regarded as ‘Manichean’. This broader derivative meaning will generally govern subsequent usage in this thesis.)

Thus in VII.12, an important statement on evil represents a breakthrough for Augustine. In his post-Manichean understanding, for something to be corrupt its goodness has simply drained away, to the point where the object under scrutiny *is finally deprived of existence itself* (rather than leaving a residuum of evil substance). Genesis 1:31 (“indeed, it was very good”) now makes deep sense for him: existence itself is always good, and this goodness is greater by the degree to which divine order is retained.

However, this kind of philosophical statement is no longer Augustine’s method of choice, and he is bemused at the younger Augustine’s *Beauty and Proportion*, a lost work that celebrated beauty in relation to an overall order. The *Confessiones* has moved far beyond this Platonic “fundamental kinship of all fine things” (borrowing Nussbaum’s phrase),²⁹³ to the melancholy of disorder. The disorder is not intrinsic to the good creation, but is a failure of misdirected human love. As Taylor puts it,

This perversity can be described as a drive to make ourselves the centre of our world, to relate everything to ourselves, to dominate and possess the things which surround us. This is both cause and consequence of a kind of slavery, a condition in which we are in turn dominated, captured by our own obsessions and fascination with the sensible.²⁹⁴

Such was the theft of the pears: “a greedy love ... my own love of mischief ... The evil in me was foul, but I loved it. I loved my own perdition and my own faults, not the things for

²⁹¹ Ibid., 67 (III.10).

²⁹² Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence* (421), ed. Philip Schaff, tr. Peter Holmes and Robert E. Wallis, *NPNF I*, vol. V (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987; originally published New York, 1887), 286 (II.9).

²⁹³ Nussbaum, “Augustine and Dante,” 64.

²⁹⁴ Taylor, 138-39.

which I committed the wrong”.²⁹⁵ In this Augustinian “zone in which we live, of half-understanding and contrary desires, the will is as much the independent variable, determining what we can know, as it is the dependent one, shaped by what we see. The causality is circular and not linear.”²⁹⁶

b) A lost peace: De civitate Dei

The tragedy of disorder, written in *Confessiones* from within one life, is writ large for human society in *De civitate Dei*. Again evil is voracity, selective sight, and a turn toward nothingness;²⁹⁷ and again, societal consequences are melancholic (XIX.5-8). Friendships are uncertain and prone to treachery. Families experience conflict. The judiciary is a zone of torture. Communication with a pet is easier than crossing cultures: “a man would more readily hold a conversation with his dog than with another man who is a foreigner.”²⁹⁸ The best peace is a pretence, and warfare a necessity. So severe is this disorder that the ontology of a good universe peopled with those who love all its varied goods almost seems submerged. Instead, a series of vices and woes seem to rule as the final statement of reality. “[I]n the midst of the error and calamity with which human society is so full”, even the consolations of friendship become “perfidy, malice and wickedness”; and the death of a friend is “bitterness”, a “wound or ulcer”. In Augustine’s pithy summary, “[t]he earth is full of this great mass of evils.”²⁹⁹

He amplifies the tragedy by juxtaposing a ‘thick’ form of ‘peace’ with the ‘thin’ form that Roman society settles for and even celebrates. Instead of the calamity of “this great mass of evils”, there could have been peace in its ‘thick’ form—“that state of security where peace is most full and most certain.”³⁰⁰ But amongst the calamity, there only remains a ‘thin’ rump of this ‘could have been’, the emaciated residuum of that ordered tapestry of goods which was such a breakthrough for the young Augustine. “Here, in this world, we are said to be happy when we have such little peace as a good life can accord.”

²⁹⁵ Augustine, *Conf.*, 47 (II.4). Cf. *ibid.* 48 (II.5): “The life we live on earth has its own attractions ... because it has a certain beauty of its own in harmony with all the rest of this world’s beauty. Friendship ... is a delightful bond, uniting many souls in one. All these things and their like can be occasions of sin because, good though they are, they are of the lowest order of good, and if we are too much tempted by them we abandon those higher and better things, your truth, your law, and you yourself, O Lord our God.”

²⁹⁶ Taylor, 138.

²⁹⁷ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 498-540 (XII) *passim*, especially 509 (XII.8); cf. also 461 (XI.9), 471 (XI.17), 477 (XI.22).

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 928 (XIX.7).

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 929-30 (XIX.8).

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 932 (XIX.10), and for quotations following.

Such ‘thin’ peace is eclipsed by the City of God’s “final peace” (XIX.13), where balance and rightly-ordered love bring concord and harmony between people. “[S]uch peace as there can be in mortal affairs” is had when *virtue* “makes right use of the blessings of peace.” That is, virtue is only virtuous when it is informed by, thus directed toward, that final ‘thick’ peace.

(This overturns another ancient debate, XIX.4. Virtue does not cause some inner ‘peace’ of the ‘rational soul’ to flourish, and ancient eudaimonism is a sham, since earthly life is so filled with woe. The very existence of the four classical virtues points to the ambiguity, vice and decrepitude of life in the flesh. Classical eudaimonism “begins to creak and crack before our eyes”³⁰¹ when Augustine argues that in the face of such woe, disturbance is *entirely* appropriate.)

Therefore the hard task for travellers to the City of God is to live among the calamity while allowing that final peace to inform, shape and guide their virtues. Such travellers recognise that peace as the soul’s proper ‘gravity’, re-shaping the soul’s loves. Thus they “maintain their identity not by withdrawal, but by something far more difficult: by maintaining a firm and balanced perspective on the whole range of loves of which men are capable in their present state”.³⁰² This balance is not like the Aristotelian doctrine of the mean, but instead conceives of real enjoyment coming from an appreciation of the source of all loves. (Hence Augustine’s ambivalence to pleasant sensory experiences: “He made them all very good, but it is He who is my Good, not they.”³⁰³) Moreover, the balance understands the moral ordering of the present to be unveiled in part by a theological understanding of “final peace”.

c) *A concupiscible helplessness: De spiritu et littera*

But even balance seems supremely difficult in the anti-Pelagian literature, where extreme human helplessness is brought to the fore. Without affective renaissance, free and unfettered commission of sin is a foregone conclusion:

³⁰¹ Nicholas Wolterstorff, “Suffering Love,” in *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*, ed. Thomas V. Morris, (Notre Dame, 1988), 205; cf. 232 n.9.

This represents a shift from Augustine’s earliest philosophical arguments. *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* offered a ‘Christianised’ account of the four classical virtues, with each subsumed under the ‘greatest commandment’ to love God, as a facet of it. This established a ‘bridgehead’ onto eudaemonist grounds of classical philosophy, and prim object-lessons could follow. Prudence was “love distinguishing with sagacity between what hinders it and what helps it”, and fortitude was “love readily bearing all things”. But by *De civitate Dei* XIX.4, prudence and fortitude are like canny, streetwise veterans which audit and enforce respectively, to prevent headlong rushes into evil.

³⁰² Brown, *Augustine*, 325 (325).

³⁰³ Augustine, *Conf.*, 239 (X.34); cf. X.31-33. An aside in *De civ. Dei* XI.25 also seeks to clarify this right enjoyment.

A man's free-will, indeed, avails for nothing except to sin, if he knows not the way of truth; and even after his duty and his proper aim shall begin to become known to him, unless he also take delight in and feel a love for it, he neither does his duty, nor sets about it, nor lives rightly. Now, in order that such a course may engage our affections, God's "love is shed abroad in our hearts," not through the free-will which arises from ourselves, but "through the Holy Ghost, which is given to us."³⁰⁴

'Will' is for Augustine "the whole agent's total active relation to God and the world",³⁰⁵ "the integrating orientation of the very self ... not distinguishable from reason and emotion because it is, as it were, the 'subsistent relation' between every part of the integrated self, including reason and emotion."³⁰⁶ A bad will is like a ship's company stricken with plague (rather than the ship's captain going mad). Glib constructions of the will, and underestimates of disordered love, compel Augustine in the Pelagian controversy. Only the love of God as mediated by the Holy Spirit can overcome this affective deficiency.

Augustine understands this human need for 'psychological healing' to explain St Paul's ambivalence toward 'the law'. For Paul, the law is supremely good; but it remains a subjective disaster for people who have not undergone this pneumatological reorientation of the affections. This accounts for Pauline aphorisms such as 2 Corinthians 3:6b, "the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (and Rom. 7:7-11, which Augustine takes to be a fuller expression of the same thought). Augustine appreciates Paul's use of the tenth commandment (against coveting) to highlight that affective disorder which the Holy Spirit must reorder:

The apostle, indeed, purposely selected this general precept, in which he embraced everything, as if this were the voice of the law, prohibiting us from all sin, when he says, "Thou shalt not covet;" for there is no sin committed except by evil concupiscence; so that the law which prohibits this is a good and praiseworthy law. But, when the Holy Ghost withholds His help, which inspires us with a good desire instead of this evil desire (in other words, diffuses love in our hearts), that law, however good in itself, only augments the evil desire by forbidding it.³⁰⁷

The conundrum of the pears remains. C.S. Lewis was correct to notice how the law of God must indeed cut across humanity like a dentist's forceps or a stint on the front line. If 'evil concupiscence'—love at its most disordered—propels each human toward sin, there can be no 'ravishment' of 'moral beauty' here.

³⁰⁴ Augustine, *On the Spirit and the Letter* (412), ed. Philip Schaff, tr. Peter Holmes and Robert E. Wallis, *NPNF 1*, vol. V (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987; originally published New York, 1887), 84-5 (§5). See page 113 on this use of Romans 5:5.

³⁰⁵ Charles T. Mathewes, "Augustinian Anthropology," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 27 no. 2 (1999): 207.

³⁰⁶ Gerald W. Schlabach, "Augustine's Hermeneutic of Humility: An Alternative to Moral Imperialism and Moral Relativism," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 22 (1994): 305.

³⁰⁷ Augustine, *De spir. et lit.*, 85 (§6).

Concupiscentia appears in Augustine's writing to drive home the extremity of disordered love and the subject's helplessness to change. The term *concupiscentia* was little used classically, but became a Christian technical term often denoting biblical ἐπιθυμία. Augustine used it broadly and interchangeably with *libido* (which is used classically). Although strong sexual passion is a typical symptom, concupiscence is not identical with sexual feeling, as when it is used of the soul's deep desire for wisdom. Concupiscence for wisdom is unambiguously good, but concupiscence is generally a sickness and a wound. It is not sin itself, since it results from but is not identical with original sin.³⁰⁸

The sexual associations of concupiscence confront us with the most trenchant objections of Nietzsche, Solomon and Nussbaum, all of whom agree that Augustine speaks for a Christian tradition that 'hates' the body, including sexual intercourse and sexual passion. Can Augustine therefore guide moderns in 'affairs of the heart'? I will return to this in Section Three. Before addressing this, though, it is important to explore the gravitas of Augustine's *concupiscentia*, for his conception of it is more than merely a misguided melancholy based in his own unfortunate experience.

d) A Christological 'hard point': *De natura et gratia*

De natura et gratia lifts Augustine's claim of human disorder beyond experience and phenomenology to the theological. The treatise has the interesting structure of a three-cornered fight. The stern moralist Pelagius attacks justifications of moral irresponsibility that appeal to 'human nature'. Since God has created human nature as good, an evil nature cannot arise from it; therefore that which ought to be done can be done.

Unlike in his earlier more philosophical works, Augustine's terms of reference in *De natura et gratia* are conspicuously christological. Augustine agrees that moral irresponsibility cannot be excused by 'human nature'. Even so, Pelagius' solution is christologically defective.

In the first of two pivotal rebuttals, Augustine finds Pelagius' solution to ignore "the righteousness that comes from God," "to establish their own", as in Romans 10:2-3. Augustine takes the following verse (v4, that "Christ is the end [τέλος] of the law") to mean that lawful obedience proceeds only from the grace of Christ. The second pivotal point against Pelagius concerns Christ's death. The absurdity of "Christ's death in vain" (Gal. 2:21) drives the rebuttal forward. Christ died to become sinful humanity's 'physician',

³⁰⁸ Margaret R. Miles, *Augustine on the Body* vol. 31 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979), 67; Gerald I. Bonner, "Libido and Concupiscentia in St Augustine," in *Studia Patristica: papers presented to the Third International Conference on Patristic Studies* (Oxford 1959), ed. Frank Leslie Cross, vol. VI (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1962), 305, 308 & passim. They cite: *En. in Ps.* 102.6; 118.20; *De nupt. et conc.* II.30.

thus “human nature cannot by any means be justified and redeemed from God’s most righteous wrath—in a word, from punishment—except by faith and the sacrament of the blood of Christ.”³⁰⁹ Clearly, the atonement is an epistemological ‘hard point’ to which any version of human nature and free will must interlock. “Our whole discussion with [Pelagians] turns upon this, that we frustrate not the grace of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord by a perverted assertion of nature.”³¹⁰

De natura et gratia must perforce investigate not only ‘human nature’, but also the manner of engagement between agencies divine and human, and in this treatise, *superbia* (rather than *concupiscentia*) emerges as humanity’s key problem.³¹¹ The conundrum of one Psalmist becomes central:

I said in my prosperity, ‘I shall never be moved.’
By your favor, O LORD, you had established me as a strong mountain;
you hid your face; I was dismayed. (Ps. 30:6-7)

The whole Psalm is surprising, and pivots on the final line. It seems shockingly non-sequential, until we understand that the Psalmist’s overconfidence, and the Lord’s disapproval, began when the Psalmist forgot the source of his prosperity. For Augustine, this failure sums up the Pelagian account of divine agency in humanity. After God heals ‘sick’ humans, “pride only has to be guarded against in things that are rightly done” and people must not “attribute to their own power the gifts of God”.³¹² So on Philippians 2:12-13 (“work out your salvation with fear and trembling [for] God ... is at work in you ... to will and to work for his good pleasure”):

Why, then, must it be with fear and trembling, and not rather with security, since God is working; except it be because there so quickly steals over our human soul, by reason of our will (without which we can do nothing well), the inclination to esteem simply as our own accomplishment whatever good we do; and so each one says in his prosperity: “I shall never be moved?” (Ps. 30:6). Therefore, He who in His good pleasure had added strength to our beauty, turns away his face ...³¹³

³⁰⁹ Augustine, *On Nature and Grace* (415), ed. Philip Schaff, tr. Peter Holmes and Robert E. Wallis, *NPNF I*, vol. V (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987; originally published New York, 1887), 122 (§2). Augustine offers no specific theory of the atonement here, but a comment elsewhere is clearly substitutionary, perhaps propitiatory: “You had not yet forgiven me any of these sins in Christ nor, on his cross, had he dissolved the enmity which my sins had earned me in your sight.” (Augustine, *Conf.*, 102, V.9.) Cf. “he was able to redeem us from sin by His own death, because He died, but He died for no sin of His own” (Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 426, X.24).

³¹⁰ Augustine, *De nat. et grat.*, 150 (§81).

³¹¹ For Augustine on *superbia* also see Miles, 69, where she argues for a development in Augustine’s understanding. Earlier literature accounted *concupiscentia* as the root of human sin, but in Augustine’s mature account *superbia* displaces *concupiscentia* as sin’s root cause. Also see Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 608-11 (XIV.13-14); and Augustine, *De nat. et grat.*, 131-35 (§§31-36).

³¹² Augustine, *De nat. et grat.*, 131 (§31).

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 132 (§31).

The affirmation of ‘will’ embedded in this warning makes clear that ‘will’ simply describes human power to act.³¹⁴ Its operation is not the offence of *superbia*. The failure is more subtle: it is the failure to understand how *even human willing is actually a form of response*.

Conversely (and perhaps paradoxically), when people ‘fall into sin’ they “perish rather from the recklessness of despair, and not only neglect the remedy of repentance, but become the slaves of lusts”.³¹⁵ In this case, they misunderstand ‘will’ in an equal and opposite direction, failing to grasp that there *is* a power of response, a ‘will’. This illusion brings a “recklessness of despair”, where the power of will is not lost, but somehow becomes hidden. Disordered love again ‘rules’ through the will, but to self-destruction. (Here is an undeniable common ground with Nietzsche, deep in the heart of this anti-Pelagian treatise. He also saw the will surging namelessly beneath the oppressed *ressentiment* of the ‘slaves’.)

Therefore in addition to the problem of *concupiscentia*, both *superbia* and despair are equally sad disorders of human love. In the rising heat of anti-Pelagian battle, Augustine again hopes for *a right love*, and ordered affections. But that Christ must die for sin confirms the extremity of the problem; this epistemological ‘hard point’ confirms that Augustine’s account of ‘human nature’ is no mere projection of his unhappy past.

Likewise however, the incarnation and resurrection of Christ offers irresistible hope for the sufficiency of the solution that is mediated by the Spirit of God:

Now all things are easy for love to effect, to which (and which alone) “Christ’s burden is light” [Mt. 11:30]—or rather, it is itself alone the burden which is light. “And his commandments are not grievous” [1 Jn 5:3]; so that whoever finds them grievous must regard the inspired statement about their ‘not being grievous’ as having been capable only of this meaning, that there may be a state of heart to which they are not burdensome, and he must pray for that disposition which he at present wants, so as to be able to fulfil all that is commanded him.³¹⁶

This of course is what the theologian *should* have said to C.S. Lewis.³¹⁷ The ‘ravishment’ of ‘moral beauty’

³¹⁴ ‘Will’ is equally straightforward in *Confessiones*: “I knew I had a will, as surely as I knew that there was life within me. When I chose to do something, or not to do it, I was quite certain that it was my own self, and not some other person, who made this act of will” (Augustine, *Conf.*, 136, VII.3). Of course Augustine knows well enough of the ambiguities, such as *akrasia*; indeed, trying to unravel this is a large measure of his entire project. But that should not confuse, nor does he confuse, this straightforward starting point: *will* simply describes that people choose, and act.

³¹⁵ Augustine, *De nat. et grat.*, 135 (§40).

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 151 (§83).

³¹⁷ See above, 68.

is not “shed abroad in our hearts” by our own nature or volition, but “by the Holy Ghost which is given to us” [Rom. 5:5] and which both helps our infirmity and co-operates with our strength.³¹⁸

Christ’s death for sin, and the pneumatological reorientation of love, secure a rightful operation of the will in response to God and his good universe. Augustine makes room for the rightful actions that Pelagius seeks to defend, but without room for *superbia* and with no cause for “the recklessness of despair”.

3. Augustine and the body

We have seen that Augustine opposes the hegemonic claims of voracious love, naming it ‘concupiscence’. But perhaps in sympathy with the Nietzschean charge against Augustine, it is easy to hear this ‘concupiscence’ as a charge against the body itself. It is important for us to pause and address this before proceeding to Augustine’s account of reordered love (Sections Four and Five).

Therefore in this section I will detail Augustine’s high view of the body, and I will clarify Augustine’s treatment of marital ‘concupiscence’. I show that Nussbaum is mistaken about Augustine’s ‘hatred’ of the body; rather, Augustine’s condemnation of hegemonic hungry love threatens her own system and highlights Nietzschean incomprehension of contented love. She observes Augustine’s lack of confidence in human choice, but fails to engage his melancholy reasons: that under voracity and selective sight, choice-making brings cruelty and chaos. Ironically, Augustine seems much more interested in using *concupiscentia* to describe *the will to power*.

a) Body and soul

The Nietzschean charge (that Augustine speaks for a Christian tradition that ‘hates’ the body) is obviously facile, if only because of Augustine’s lifelong hostility to Manicheism. What, then, is the body’s standing in relation to the soul for Augustine?

The entire corpus states and restates the general principle that “corruption of the body ... was not the cause of the first sin, but its punishment; nor was it corruptible flesh that made the soul sinful, but the sinful soul that made the flesh corruptible.”³¹⁹ That vices can range from the overtly bodily (like drunkenness) to those that seem less physical (like envy or hatred), implicates the soul rather than merely the body. (This anti-Manichean stance does become tricky in the later Pelagian dispute, when Augustine describes a fundamental ‘change’ in human nature.)

³¹⁸ Augustine, *De nat. et grat.*, 151 (§84).

³¹⁹ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 585 (XIV.3).

Even this much is counter to prevailing attitudes about bodily life. For Margaret Miles, the body was a ‘stone rejected’ by classical antiquity. It is not so much that the body is “unambiguously scorned and disparaged” by thoughtful persons, whether Christian or pagan (although she does however find some extreme statements: “I am killing it because it is killing me”).³²⁰ It is rather that these thinkers gravitated toward cosmological explanations for experiences of existential dualism. Against this backdrop, Augustine “describe[s] the meaning and value of the human body”.³²¹

A bipartite conception of body and soul is obvious throughout his thought—but merely to speak of ‘body’ and ‘soul’ does not in itself constitute Greek (or Cartesian) dualism, and Augustine’s view of the body-soul relation is never hard and fast. After a lightning tour of philosophical disputes in metaphysical anthropology, Augustine refuses to arbitrate and seems tired of such enquiry. “This dispute is not easy to settle; or, if the proof is plain, the statement requires time. This is an expenditure of time and strength which we need not incur.”³²² Despite this ‘shrug’, he secures a high place for the body, and informs language of Greek dualism with the biblical account of a creature well-made as *imago dei*. The significant result here is that “the chief good of man is not the chief good of the body; but what is the chief good either of both soul and body, or of the soul only, that is man’s chief good.”³²³ This is not prevarication. Augustine is asserting equivalence between ‘the chief good’ of soul and of body. In Augustine, soul is never far from body. Without the soul, the body would be as if anaesthetised. Soul is “an entity whose activities underlie the being and behavior of the body in such a way as to make the difference between merely physical activity, and the conscious, animated, purposive behaviour characteristic of living human beings.”³²⁴

This clear endorsement of bodily existence becomes more pronounced in *De civitate Dei*:

There is no need, then, in the matter of our sins and vices, to do injustice to our Creator by accusing the nature of flesh, which, of its own kind and in its due place, is good. But it is not good for anyone to forsake the good Creator and to live according to a created good: whether according to the flesh, or the soul, or the whole man who, because he consists of both soul and flesh, can be signified by either ‘soul’ alone or ‘flesh’ alone.³²⁵

³²⁰ Miles, 128, citing an unnamed desert father.

³²¹ Ibid., 1.

³²² Augustine, *On the Morals of the Catholic Church* (388), ed. Philip Schaff, tr. Richard Stothert, *NPNF 1*, vol. IV (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989; originally published New York, 1887), 43 (§4). This is all the more striking only one year after *De immortalitate animae*.

³²³ Ibid. (§4).

³²⁴ Gareth Matthews; cited in Miles, 14-15.

³²⁵ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 588-89 (XIV.5).

The difficulty in being precise about the interconnection of body and soul is still evident (as can also be seen for example, in XIX.3); but more important is Augustine's decision not to ontologise Galatians 5:17 ("what the flesh desires [ἐπιθυμεῖ] is opposed to the Spirit"). When evil is understood as the privation of good, Paul need not be understood as a radical dualist who suggests that 'flesh' is evil because it is material. Rather, for both Augustine and Paul, a christology of the incarnation and atonement guarantees bodily goodness. In Christ, humanity has received "a most merciful cleansing of mind, body and spirit alike."³²⁶

[T]he good and true Mediator showed that it is sin which is evil, and not the substance or nature of the flesh. He showed that a body of flesh and a human soul could be assumed and retained without sin, and laid aside at death, and changed into something better by resurrection.³²⁷

The idea that body and soul can be 'mixed' "was deeply troubling both to classical (Stoic and Neoplatonic) and to dualist (Gnostic-Manichean) thought", describing "an experience of contamination of the higher by the lower elements."³²⁸ Yet by *De civitate Dei* XV.7, Augustine can describe the body as 'spouse' of the soul. For Miles, Augustine has seen to the heart of Pauline uses of σῶμα (body) and σὰρξ (flesh).³²⁹ Likewise, "the Pauline description of the radical disjunction between σὰρξ and πνεῦμα ... formulated for [Augustine] the central problem of human being, a 'moral conflict within the human soul, not an encounter between opposing substances.'"³³⁰

That is, Augustine understands with St Paul that the offence of 'flesh' is emphatically *not* that it is bodily. Flesh is body understood without reference to Spirit—which is to say, without reference to God. It is the body of disordered love.

b) Sex and marriage

But even though such a strong case can be put for Augustine's high view of the body, is the view undermined when Augustine associates concupiscence with marital sex? Any discussion about the matter should notice at the outset how sexual concupiscence is simply not a major preoccupation for Augustine. Indeed the first reference to sexual lust in *De civ. Dei* only occurs in XIV.15 as one among many lusts typical of disordered affection. When Augustine thinks of sex, he immediately thinks of these other lusts.³³¹ This is the same

³²⁶ Ibid., 432 (X.27).

³²⁷ Ibid., 426 (X.24).

³²⁸ Miles, 2.

³²⁹ Ibid., 132 n.11 (following J.A.T. Robinson).

³³⁰ Ibid., 24-25 (quoting W.A. Schumacher).

³³¹ Cf. Augustine, *De nupt. et conc.*, 272 (I.20), where sexual lust is just a species of the more generic 'lusts' of 1 John 2:15-17.

territory as *Confessiones*: the common denominator is, again, *voracity*. Beings who only perceive the scarcity of a fragmented moral field, can be expected to react in this extreme manner. The desperation that people display from infancy for every other good, is seamless with their desperation for sex. This *seamlessness* strikes him; and human conception after an orgasmic moment of intense desperation inaugurates a continuum of voracity that appears in all people even from infancy.

Even so, the soul is the spouse of the body; and “what pertains more closely to a body than its sex?”³³² Not only is sexual concupiscence no major preoccupation for Augustine; we rather find that his high view of the body extends to a high view of sexual intercourse. The vision of sexual intercourse in paradise (XIV.26) instantiates the peace of XIV.10, describing a thankful, joyful and honest love that the pair always experience—and with no hint that it is not deeply, and bodily, pleasurable. This kind of sex is highly regarded by Augustine, and pleasure itself, either sexual or otherwise, is *not* the offence.³³³

Clearly then, the problem of concupiscence is not that it anticipates whatever is pleasurable. Rather, concupiscence offends Augustine by its overthrow of reason. He takes the involuntary nature of sexual arousal to reflect this overthrow, along with the general impulse to privacy during sexual intercourse, which he takes to evidence shame about overthrown reason. Augustine concludes that sexual concupiscence is a just punishment for humanity, a loss of rational control for a race who had so brazenly sought to seize control.³³⁴

Ergo, on this account, ‘original sin’: Adam’s punishment was concupiscence; we are conceived in a concupiscible moment; thus just as in the Scriptures, humanity is in solidarity with Adam. The white-hot core of debate is that when Pelagians deny all this in service of optimistic claims for free-will, the death of Christ is again rendered unnecessary, including its efficacy for children.³³⁵ The questions about sex which we put to this debate are actually only put to its supporting structures.

In the course of the debate Augustine states that concupiscible desperation occurs even in marriage, and always at the moment of orgasm. Yet neither sex nor marriage are impugned by this concupiscence. The situation differs *outside* of marriage, where the concupiscible

³³² Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 195 (V.7).

³³³ This is reiterated elsewhere, e.g. Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage* (401), ed. Philip Schaff, tr. C.L. Cornish, *NPNF I*, vol. III (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988; originally published New York, 1887), 407 (§18), where “carnal delight” “cannot be lust” when ‘used’ rightly; and Augustine, *De nupt. et conc.*, 291 (II.22), where “pleasure can be ... honourable”.

³³⁴ Augustine, *De civ. Dei* (Dods), 614-18 (XIV.16-18); Augustine, *De nupt. et conc.*, 266 (I.7).

³³⁵ Augustine, *De nupt. et conc.*, 272 (I.21) & passim.

element in sexual activity “has a certain prurient activity which plays the king in the foul indulgences of adultery, and fornication, and lasciviousness, and uncleanness”.³³⁶ These vices represent a wider social disordering that is difficult to condone. If we recall Nussbaum’s argument that to *name* these as vices generates revenge, localism, and hatred,³³⁷ Augustine might reply in terms of the sadness and ambiguity which he himself wrought by taking a concubine.

The story is unbearably poignant. “I lived with a woman ... a mistress whom I had chosen for no special reason but that my restless passions had alighted on her. But she was the only one and I was faithful to her.” This was “a bargain struck for lust, in which the birth of children is begrudged”—“though, if they come,” as a son did, “we cannot help but love them.”³³⁸ It also seems that the natural good of companionship emerged; she “was torn from my side as an obstacle to my marriage”, “which crushed my heart to bleeding, because I loved her dearly.” As a consolation, and impatient to marry, he takes another mistress, “more [as] a slave of lust than a true lover of marriage”. The marriage itself is thus marred, including that “the wound that I had received when my first mistress was wrenched away showed no signs of healing.”³³⁹ The goods of creation appear and reappear; but concupiscence has “played the king” so as to make them, finally, melancholy.

The point of marriage, by contrast, is to bring a peaceful order where those goods can be enjoyed. Marriage is one shelter (and celibacy the other) where peace begins to be found. In “the restraint of the marriage alliance, contracted for the purpose of having children”,³⁴⁰ children can be a welcome fruit. Disordered desire is stilled, ceasing to range over all humankind, so that *one* person becomes the grateful and constant locus of desire, rather than the pitiful ‘love triangles’ so vividly portrayed in Augustine’s own past.

Although a residuum of concupiscence remains within marital intercourse, “[c]arnal concupiscence ... must not be ascribed to marriage: it is only to be tolerated in marriage. It is not a good which comes out of the essence of marriage, but an evil which is the accident of original sin.”³⁴¹ For the ‘regenerate’ married person, “concupiscence is not itself sin any

³³⁶ Ibid., 269 (I.13).

³³⁷ See above, 44.

³³⁸ Augustine, *Conf.*, 72 (IV.2).

³³⁹ Ibid., 131 (VI.15).

³⁴⁰ Ibid., 72 (IV.2).

³⁴¹ Augustine, *De nupt. et conc.*, 271 (I.19).

longer, whenever they do not consent to it for illicit works³⁴² ... As arising from sin, it is, I say, called sin, although in the regenerate it is not actually sin”.³⁴³

Although Augustine might seem unsatisfactorily to twist and turn, his contention makes sense on his view that regeneration entails a pneumatological and psychological overwhelming of concupiscence with new affections. So even something as ‘suspect’ as marital concupiscence is validated (“is not ... sin”) when it finds a place with the created goods of marriage, which delight the affections of this regenerate person. We might even better speak of a ‘reframing’ or ‘reorientation’ of marital ‘concupiscence’, rather than its overwhelming. “[I]n the indispensable duties of the marriage state,” sexual concupiscence “exhibits the docility of the slave.”³⁴⁴

Augustine’s case needs revision, if only because it was a mistake not to see that concupiscence is hardly concupiscent when rendered ‘docile’. Even if it is not always ‘docile’, Aquinas will revise the ‘eclipse of rationality’ by pointing out that the hindrance of an act of reason should not be equated to the overthrow of the order of reason; and marital sex only does the first, not the second.³⁴⁵ ‘Concupiscence’ is not an appropriate term for libidinous sexual delight in marriage, and Augustine’s critique is overly rigorous in its application per-act.³⁴⁶

But neither should our dismissals be too quick. A knowing comment about concupiscence decreasing for the elderly and the sexually continent, but increasing in even the old when they abandon themselves to it, shows this deliberation is done with an eye to the ‘real world’.³⁴⁷ Sexual desire and its expression is not always untrammelled delight, and the darkly terrible secrets that stalk our modern state of sexual ‘enlightenment’—ranging from the disorders of desire that regularly mar even marriage, through to sexual obsessions that require imprisonment—would come as no surprise to Augustine.

³⁴² ‘Illicit works’ means sexual activities that cannot result in conception. While discussion of this morality should be pursued elsewhere, it is pertinent to observe that Roman Catholic moral thought has tended to make this judgment, with Augustine, on a ‘per-act’ basis. However, Protestant ethics concludes that the goods of marriage are biblical norms that are better appropriated ‘per-marriage’. This accounts for Protestant tolerance of contraception, and many forms of marital sexual play, in the context of a *marriage* that is gratefully open, fertility permitting, to the bearing and sustenance of children.

³⁴³ Augustine, *De nupt. et conc.*, 274 (I.25).

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 269 (I.13).

³⁴⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* tr. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, (London: Benzinger Brothers, 1937), vol. 19, 83-84 (3a.supp.41.3.ad6). For referencing style used for Thomas see below, 124 n.455.

³⁴⁶ Cf. 99 n.342 for the same point in reference to contraception.

³⁴⁷ Augustine, *De nupt. et conc.*, 275 (I.28).

Thus the generic categorisation of sexual concupiscence alongside more general ‘lusts’ is hardly fanciful, and the travails it can bring are no less severe than those brought by any other lust. This is the backdrop against which Augustine longs with Paul for ‘redemption of the body’ (Rom. 7:24) in the kingdom of heaven, “where there shall be not only no guilt for sin, but no concupiscence to excite it”.³⁴⁸

“The nature of the original fault had, for Augustine, nothing essentially to do with the creation of the body”³⁴⁹ because “Augustine had come to a firmly-rooted idea of the essential goodness of created things”.³⁵⁰ In the arena of sexuality, Paul Ramsey’s study shows this conviction actually to be the *distinguishing* feature of Augustine.³⁵¹ Reflecting on Augustine after his *Body and Society*, Brown unequivocally defends him. Despite Augustine’s idiosyncrasies, “the pace of his thought on sexuality was set by firm if courteous disagreement with other Christians and upholders of radical ascetic ideals, most notably with Jerome.” Against such contemporaries, Augustine’s is “a call to moderation”.³⁵² Brown’s powerful comments on the anti-Pelagian works describe a realisation that this ‘harsh’ literature was actually triggered by Augustine’s earlier venture into uncharted territory:

He had come to envision, in a manner far more consequential than many of his Christian contemporaries, Adam and Eve as fully sexual beings, capable of ... a glorious intercourse, unriven by conflicting desires, without the shadow of sin upon it. ... two fully physical bodies follow[ing] the stirrings of their souls, “all in a wondrous pitch of perfect peace”.³⁵³

For married people now, any regrets are to be had against *this* vision. Indeed, Brown is hotly polemical toward the “egregious cultural narcissism” that blames Augustine for all the Western sexual discontents,³⁵⁴ even branding one recent treatment “a travesty”.³⁵⁵ Augustine’s main concerns actually lay elsewhere than sex. This is better seen once Augustine’s project is held against the Nietzschean complaint.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 279 (I.38).

³⁴⁹ Miles, 67.

³⁵⁰ Brown, *Augustine*, 325.

³⁵¹ Cf. Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 628-30 (XIV.26) for his account of sexual intercourse in paradise; and cf. Paul Ramsey, “Human Sexuality in the History of Redemption,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 16 no. 1 (1988): 62 & passim.

³⁵² Brown, *Augustine (new edn.)*, 500.

³⁵³ Ibid., 501, citing one of the recently discovered letters (Divjak 6*).

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 502.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 518 n.69.

c) *The Nietzschean complaint*

Martha Nussbaum has “much admiration” for Brown’s first edition of the *Biography*.³⁵⁶ His recent comments about Augustine’s description of “glorious” sexual intercourse should, therefore, assist Nussbaum radically to revise her assessment of Augustine on the body. In her view, “emotional error is understood [by Augustine] to be rooted in the body itself and its sexuality”.³⁵⁷ Augustine is guilty by association with traditional Christianity’s alleged “hatred of this world and of the body.”³⁵⁸ Elsewhere, “the disfiguring self-hatred caused by a notion of original sin” (here we presume Augustine) is trumped by Nietzsche’s Dionysian “affirmation of life”.³⁵⁹ A language of disjunction, which downgrades bodily existence, is presented as Augustine’s. He “strips away ... the merely human” in love. He “weans himself [toward] independence” of the temporal. Christians “sever their connections to earthly desires and pleasures”. People’s “bodies [are] incidental accretions from the world of sin”. Augustine makes “explicit denunciations of earthly ties”.³⁶⁰

These plainly false statements are not incidental, and the progress of each argument pivots on them. Nussbaum does appreciate that in Augustine “the emotions are restored to a place of value in the good human life” where there is a “deep vulnerability to external influence”, “a pervasive sense of longing” toward God, and an “erotic longing”.³⁶¹ However, this appreciation is thin, and becomes hostility again when Augustine offers “no continued erotic vulnerability of any sort”.³⁶² His work is “ultimately, in the service of advancing the contrite soul toward a nonerotic life”³⁶³ where “once grace is assured, there is no need, really, of other human individuals”.³⁶⁴

In a will-to-power reading, love is only intelligible if hungry. But Augustine’s project is to question the ‘globalisation’ of lust. What if some love is *not* hungry, just content? What if not all love is from need? What if some love simply recognises what is precious, not understanding itself to be the creator of ‘preciousness’? To a Nietzschean, these questions are at best unanticipated, and at worst incomprehensible.

³⁵⁶ Nussbaum, “Augustine and Dante,” 85 n.4.

³⁵⁷ Nussbaum, “Morality and Emotions,” 561.

³⁵⁸ Nussbaum, “Augustine and Dante,” 86 n.13.

³⁵⁹ Nussbaum, “Transfigurations: Nietzsche,” 108.

³⁶⁰ Nussbaum, “Augustine and Dante,” 61, 65, 66, 81 and 84 respectively.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 62, 71 and 72 respectively.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, 84.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, 85.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 84.

To demonstrate her historical ‘ascent’ of love, Nussbaum assimilates Augustine into the classic tradition, as if he only sought to develop it. Thus she has no interest in the different scriptural ground from which the mature Augustine regularly subverts the classical tradition. She misunderstands his view of the moral field, tending meagrely to summarise his view of the moral field as a “fundamental kinship of all fine things”.³⁶⁵ (She *does* accurately describe Augustine’s “different forms of false love”,³⁶⁶ as appropriated by Dante, where “excessive” interests—such as pride, envy, anger, sloth and lust—produce “defective interest” toward other people, “who are worthy objects of love”. Her appreciation of the Augustinian conception of false love emerges when she refers to its “insights”, but she makes little use of whatever makes it insightful.)

For Augustine, love recognises a preciousness intrinsically *there* (thanks to God), rather than ‘creating’ this preciousness through voracity. He cannot predict why some see this, and others do not. When Nussbaum says that “Augustinian love does not retain sufficient respect for the lover’s freedom and choice”,³⁶⁷ she has correctly noticed Augustine’s dependence upon God, and his lack of confidence in human choices that are marred by voracity and selective sight. But the offence she takes (that Augustine lacks “sufficient respect”) relies upon a Nietzschean interpretative decision.

Likewise her construal of Augustine as inhabiting a “world of chance encounters” and “sudden reversals” shows no sympathy to Augustine’s own disastrous choices as a lover, and although Nussbaum pays some attention to *Confessiones*, she simply does not engage with Augustine’s testimony that the life of bodily passion was tried and found wanting.³⁶⁸ He is simply taken to hate the body; presumably he just needed to say “yes—to the inconstancy and imperfection ... of real-life love”³⁶⁹ and to favour with Nietzsche “a view that urges us to take joy in life, in the body, in becoming—even, and especially, in face of the recognition that the world is chaotic and cruel.”³⁷⁰

But Augustine would retort that Nietzsche’s voracity and selective sight *make* the world chaotic and cruel, and would refer us in this to his concubine (and to his “insights” that

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 64. In fairness, this comment was made in reference to the early ‘Platonic’ Augustine and in contrast to *Confessiones*.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 82, as for quotations following.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 80.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 66-67, 69.

³⁶⁹ Nussbaum, “Transfiguration Everyday,” 259.

³⁷⁰ Nussbaum, “Transfigurations: Nietzsche,” 98.

Nussbaum saw). Nietzsche can brush this aside, since his order is of rank. Presumably this is not available to Nussbaum, and we await from her an alternative account of order and disorder, of peace and of cruelty. Conversely, Augustine's account offers a basis for justice and a common life.³⁷¹

d) A social judgment on the will to power

Augustine makes his own judgment against the will to power. Of course, it is clear enough to him that people have will, and various powers.³⁷² The problem arises when love and will are conflated to become hegemonic and hungry. Manifold voracious obsessions are our tragic plight.³⁷³ But the epic melancholic refrain in *De civitate Dei* is of a humanity persistently *missing* what could be, *because* of relentless and hegemonic strivings of power.

The two 'cities' correlate respectively with humility and pride, and the earthly city "when it seeks mastery, is itself mastered by the lust for mastery even though all the nations serve it."³⁷⁴ "This 'lust for mastery' disturbs and consumes the human race with great ills".³⁷⁵ The minor-key melodies that follow are too numerous to list; but special attention might be paid to Books III and IV, where Augustine repeatedly observes all the goods that were destroyed in the bloody, lordly establishment of *Pax Romana*.³⁷⁶ Likewise, the melancholic first half of Book XIX treats the quest for 'peace' by various forms of mastery; but these are regarded as a pale shadow of true peace.

When Bonner enumerates Augustine's many references to various lusts, *he finds the predominant concupiscence to be the domination of others by the exercise of power*. This seems an ironic rejoinder to the Nietzschean complaints against Augustine. Sex was always a secondary topic of discussion—as we have already seen, the first clear reference to sex is only at XIV.15 (and in the later Pelagian disputes, only because forced upon him). Bonner suggests that the later Christian emphasis on sexual concupiscence, though having a clear basis in Augustine, developed once the apologetic intention of *De civitate Dei* was eclipsed

³⁷¹ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, XIX.21.

³⁷² See above, 93 n.314; and love 'strives' in the description of it quoted above, 81 (*De civ. Dei* XIV.7).

³⁷³ Cf. Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 613-14 (XIV.15, final paragraph).

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 3 (I, preface).

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 111 (III.14).

³⁷⁶ See especially I.31, 33; III.10, 13-14; and a summary statement at IV.3. Similar reflections are found at V.17, 19, 22, but this time to consider the supervention of God's sovereignty.

in the post-Constantinian empire. It was in the interests of this empire to supplant, as it were, Augustine's attack on the lust for power by use of his writings on sexual morality.³⁷⁷

4. Enjoying each other

Thus far I have shown how for Augustine, a logic of love grounds our responses to the moral order. This love is disordered, though not in such a way as to impugn bodily existence. It remains to be seen, though, how Augustine understands love to become reordered, and this will be the subject mainly of Section Five. I will now show Augustine's deep respect for other human persons, and his commitment to the necessity of loving them (a necessary preparation to the discussion of love's reordering in Section Five). I will proceed by addressing the charge that Augustinian theology does not need human others.

Nussbaum puts the charge in the following way. "[O]nce grace is assured" for Augustine, "there is no need, really, of other human individuals".³⁷⁸ His position opposes that of Dante, who "restore[s] dignity to this-worldly will and den[ies] that earthly relations and acts are merely provisional",³⁷⁹ But Augustine is among those who "denigrate their own movement and striving",³⁸⁰ against whom questions remain outstanding "about the significance of this-worldly striving within a universe that points towards eternity."³⁸¹

Indeed we can give the charge a finer grain. Grounds for it might reside in the impassibility of God (if humans are *imago dei*); or in Augustine's unfortunate early formulation that people may be used (*uti*) for the enjoyment (*frui*) of God; or in the eudaemonist substructure of his thought. But in each case, I will offer a 'thick' theological defence to show that for Augustine, humanity is to be 'enjoyed in God'. Augustine's strenuous campaigns against social evils are evidence of his living in accordance with such a view.

a) Impassibility?

God's existence remains alien to our own. He is free from the 'discomfort' we associate with even 'good' affections, such as compassion—a discomfort endemic "to the infirmity of this present life."³⁸² In Augustine's intellectual milieu, the very postures that generate the undisturbed 'wise man' also make an impassible God and heaven irresistibly attractive.

³⁷⁷ Bonner, 312-14.

³⁷⁸ Nussbaum, "Augustine and Dante," 84.

³⁷⁹ Nussbaum, "*Wuthering Heights*," 377.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 375.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 377.

³⁸² Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 366 (IX.5).

Augustine's formal and willing adherence to divine impassibility is unquestioned, for neither God nor angels have 'passion' in the sense of 'disturbance'. No 'war' of passion rages 'against their soul', to borrow the biblical phrase (1 Pt. 2:11). On this view, scriptural language is conventionally analogical.

In an arena of acute interest for a post-Holocaust world, hard questions might be put to Augustine about such divine beings. It might also seem that other decisions are required about the nature of the *imago dei*. These controverted paths might then combine to suggest that an orthodox position on God's impassibility renders human compassion unnecessary. Of course, Stoicism made similar connections, which we know Augustine trenchantly to have opposed. Even cursory scrutiny shows that Augustine had ample reasons for seeing things differently. These reasons fall into three broad categories. Firstly, the absence of divine *disturbance* need not connote the absence of divine *affection*. Secondly, the eschaton is full of 'love and gladness'. Thirdly, in the incarnate Christ God *instantiates* rightly ordered emotion rather than repudiating emotion as such.

A being's "blessedness consists in the possession of that whose loss makes them miserable. Only He, then, Who is blessed not in another, but only in his own good self, cannot be miserable, because only He cannot lose himself."³⁸³ This account of divine aseity shares something of ancient teleology—God here is an 'unmoved mover' of sorts—but the 'movement' on view is the attention of love. All angelic and divine action issues from the settled, co-ordinating force of love. Augustine therefore courts the univocal possibilities of a language of divine 'affection' that is untainted by disturbance or 'passion'. This divine 'affection' does not primarily connote the attention of divine love toward a creature, yet such love-to-creature is enveloped in God's activity for (what in Scripture is termed) 'the sake of his Name' or 'his own glory and goodness'. Such a foundation would explain why God does not experience the 'disturbances' of passion.

This discussion is further informed by Augustine's attention to impassibility and Stoic *apatheia*:

If ... we are to understand ... 'impassibility' to mean a life without those emotions [*adfectiones*] which arise contrary to reason and which disturb the mind, it is clearly a good and desirable condition. It does not, however, belong to this present life. ... This condition of *apatheia* ... will come to pass only when there is no sin in man. ...

Moreover, if *apatheia* is to be defined as a condition such that the mind cannot be touched by any emotion [*adfectus*] whatsoever, who would not judge such insensitivity to be the worst of all vices? It can, therefore, be said without absurdity that our perfect blessedness which is to come will be free

³⁸³ Ibid., 499 (XII.1).

from the pangs of fear and from any kind of grief; but who save one wholly estranged from the truth would say that there will be no love and no gladness there?³⁸⁴

By now we are deeply into the territory of *adfectus* as ‘converted’ from *motus*, with Augustine exploring rightly ordered affections. This terrain is by now familiar to us. With the philosophers, passions do make war against the soul; somewhat with the philosophers, affections can be wrongly directed, blurring their distinction to passions; but emphatically against the philosophers, rightly ordered affection lies at the core of what it is to be truly human. The eschaton is free of *disturbance* but full of *love and gladness*. (This seems strikingly to vindicate Augustine over Nietzschean charges against his eschatology—unless Nussbaum’s point is that this non-erotic ‘love’ and ‘gladness’ do not count to make people ‘needed’. I will return to this.)

Just as importantly, the incarnate Christ is seen to have experienced rightly ordered affection, and the ‘disturbances’ he felt were his appropriate human responses “to the infirmity of this present life.”³⁸⁵ “For human emotion was not feigned in him Who truly had the body of a man and the mind of a man. ... Truly, He accepted these emotions into His human mind for the sake of His own assured purpose, and when he so willed”.³⁸⁶ Again, Augustine’s point is not based rigidly in semantics (although the subservient role of *motus* can again be detected in this discussion). The point is rather that God in Christ *instantiates* rightly ordered emotion.

Therefore even within what we might call Augustine’s system of ‘hard-impassibility’, there is a life of affectionate love, within the Godhead, at the eschaton, and within the incarnate Christ. Augustine can place love at the centre of human being as reflecting the *imago dei* and in a manner quite unthreatened by even a most orthodox conception of impassibility. For impassibility, strictly understood, is about the absence of *disturbance* associated with human emotion; but in Augustine it is emphatically *not* about the absence of a holy divine affection.

b) ‘Use’ and ‘delight’?

Although divine impassibility does not put divine and human love at risk, Augustine’s promulgation of the ‘use’ of other human persons might seem to downgrade their importance.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., 600 (XIV.9).

³⁸⁵ Ibid., 366 (IX.5).

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 599 (XIV.9).

While struggling to articulate a correct and non-voracious approach to the world's goods, *uti* ('use') becomes Augustine's favourite term—a way of “ordering that which one does *not* love toward the goal of achieving that which one does.”³⁸⁷ The influential distinction is between *uti* and ‘delight’ or ‘enjoyment’ (*frui*). It is elementary to *De doctrina Christiana*,³⁸⁸ where only God should be enjoyed, and earthly things only used (since to *delight* in an earthly thing may give rise to a disordered love). In *De doctrina Christiana* I.22, Augustine infamously concludes that use-relationships between humans are appropriate.

But O'Donovan observes a clear development by *De civitate Dei* XIX, when humanity's peaceful goal is the thrice-mentioned crescendo—a “perfectly ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God and of one another in God”.³⁸⁹ A significant shift has occurred in Augustine's view of the relationships between human persons. ‘In God’, the resounding value of other people is observed and solidarity with them enjoined. Others are honoured on the basis of their creaturehood and without reference to their merits.

Thus Augustine can envision ‘use’ in the service of human community. “In the earthly city ... the whole use of temporal things is directed towards the enjoyment of earthly peace. In the heavenly City, however, such use is directed towards the enjoyment of eternal peace.”³⁹⁰ Augustine's ‘use’ is not ordered by a monistically conceived good, but by that cluster of goods which constitute a ‘City’ of peaceful relationships. The pilgrimage to the heavenly City brings together “citizens of all nations and every tongue”, who are yet happy to work alongside the earthly city in its efforts to maintain earthly peace. These pilgrims understand their righteous acts to be “for God” *and* “for neighbour”, “since the city's life is inevitably a social one”.³⁹¹ So in fact Augustine's conception and revision of *uti* causes him to “burst outside” the classical ideal, and beyond pagan ethics.³⁹² His mature formulation marries material aspects of creaturehood to eschatological and social longings for the City of God.

³⁸⁷ Oliver M.T. O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980), 25.

³⁸⁸ Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* (397), ed. Philip Schaff, tr. J.F. Shaw, *NPNF 1*, including *The City of God*, vol. II (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988; originally published New York, 1886), 523-24 (I:3-5).

³⁸⁹ Or near equivalent—twice in *De civ. Dei* XIX.13 and once in XIX.17. Cf. Oliver M.T. O'Donovan, “Augustinian Ethics,” in *A New Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, eds James F. Childress and John Macquarrie, (London: SCM, 1986); and O'Donovan, *Self-Love*, 25.

³⁹⁰ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 940 (XIX.14).

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 946-47 (XIX.17).

³⁹² Wolterstorff, 206. However the main point of Wolterstorff's argument is that while classical eudaimonism was radically transformed in this way, Augustine failed to ‘carry it through’ in his doctrine of God, meaning that he should have adjusted his doctrine of impassability. (*Ibid.*, 210-11.)

This revised conception of ‘use’ in the service of human community overturns important Nietzschean charges against Augustine. It is plainly baseless for Nussbaum to imply that Augustinian Christianity deals in “anger and intolerance” and somehow excludes the alien and the stranger.³⁹³ Also false is her charge that Augustine annuls earthly activity and renders other people unnecessary. For Augustine, earthly human activity is less about ‘striving for’ than about ‘responding to’ the divine peace initiative; and rather than people being erotically ‘needed’, they are ‘enjoyed’ (which is a valid form of ‘interest’). But a voracious Nietzschean commitment to ‘need’ and ‘striving’, where true humanity always features a hungry *eros*, will always tend to denigrate such enjoyment and response.

c) *Eudaimonism?*

But perhaps the greatest threat to the importance of other human persons might be seen to reside in another substructure of Augustine’s thought. For O’Donovan, Augustine stands within the classical tradition of eudaimonism,³⁹⁴ and eudaimonism tends to presume egoism.

Unlike the development seen in his *uti-frui* distinction, his eudaimonism does not seem to be revised appreciably. Augustine’s argument in the early *De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae* is eudaimonistically premised: “How then, according to reason, ought man to live? We all certainly desire to live happily; and there is no human being but assents to this statement almost before it is made.”³⁹⁵ Nearly thirty years later, little seems to have changed: :

It is the settled opinion of anyone who is in any way capable of using reason that all men wish to be blessed. But whenever men in their weakness ask who is blessed or what makes them so, they raise a great host of controversies upon which the philosophers have exhausted their efforts and spent their leisure.³⁹⁶

This desire to be blessed begins an epic argument, which culminates in the peace of the heavenly city that we have seen. O’Donovan considers that for Augustine, the commands of God, though prior, can be viewed within this wider framework. “Augustinian eudaimonism ... is not a teleological ethic in the modern sense, but a teleological metaphysical framework that serves to give intelligibility to ethics that are in substance command-based.”³⁹⁷

³⁹³ Nussbaum, “*Wuthering Heights*,” 377.

³⁹⁴ O’Donovan, *Self-Love*, 16; he amply supports the case for indebtedness to the tradition throughout Augustine’s works (168, n.20).

³⁹⁵ Augustine, *De mor. ecc. cath.*, 42 (§3).

³⁹⁶ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 390 (X.1).

³⁹⁷ O’Donovan, “Augustinian Ethics,” 46.

But while O'Donovan's eudaimonistic diagnosis remains formally true, it risks misrepresenting the later Augustine, for whom the infinite worth of God's person, and the contingent value of other human persons, stood rather more dramatically in the foreground (as seen in his change of mind over *uti*). The eudaimonistic quest for peace is transformed, beyond all expectation, into a most unexpected centring upon God and others. O'Donovan of course acknowledges fundamental differences in Augustine's eudaimonism, insofar as "happiness cannot be reached by solitary individuals or under the conditions of earthly existence"; only God can make the human person happy.³⁹⁸ However, perhaps by the end of his life (like the course of *De civitate Dei* X-XIX), Augustine's eudaimonistic scheme has become so heavily modified that the word is less suited to describe it. Formally, the eudaimonistic premise remains; but materially, it is so radically changed in content as to contradict the early Augustine's eudaimonism.

This 'less suited' is due to the movements we are investigating and have seen: the egoistic connotation is lost; and although rightly ordered love may bring happiness, the presence or absence of that happiness is so completely outside the point of attention as to be entirely subsidiary. The '-monism' in 'eudaimonism' is stretched to breaking point, and "begin[ning] to creak and crack before our eyes".³⁹⁹ To say less risks a return to the voracity that is quelled by 'love shed abroad in the heart'.

d) Augustine's 'development projects'?

Augustine's respect for the love and active service of human others has an ample theoretical basis, and there are consonant practices in his life.

Brown has radically revised his previous picture of a harsh, burnt-out older Augustine. In this revision we see Augustine living by his commitments about the place and preciousness of others. "Few documents have illustrated so vividly, as have [the Divjak letters], the extent and the urgency of the involvement of Augustine and his colleagues in the social ills of their own time."⁴⁰⁰ Augustine's attempt to curb the voracity of one Antoninus, the young bishop of Fussala (on the rural outskirts of Hippo) was already known from his 422 letter to Pope Celestine. But this is vividly complemented by the Divjak letter to Fabiola, Antoninus' senatorial protector. Brown summarises it:

The upshot of repeated attempts to investigate and discipline Antoninus was that, in the hot late summer of 422, Augustine found himself stranded for weeks on end in the middle of a countryside where everyone spoke only

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ Wolterstorff, 205; cf. 232 n.9.

⁴⁰⁰ Brown, *Augustine (new edn.)*, 468.

Punic. He visited the village of Fussala, where the inhabitants pointed out to him the holes in the houses from which Antoninus had pillaged the stones in order to build a splendid new episcopal palace. He was finally left, sitting alone one morning in a village church after the entire congregation had walked out in disgust—even, he told Fabiola, the nuns—leaving him and his colleagues to wonder how, by what series of misjudgements exploited by an able rogue, they had brought “so much sadness upon the country people”.⁴⁰¹

Brown goes on to describe Augustine’s efforts against a slave trade within the empire, also revealed in these letters. He seeks to stop the slavers, but is reluctant for them to suffer the appalling flogging by leaden-whip required under Roman law; therefore he and others arduously search for different Roman laws under which to prosecute them. The same campaign ranges from time spent interviewing a young woman terrorised by the slavers, through to the “great rhetor” dictating letters calculated “to move a distant court”.⁴⁰² These interventions parallel Nussbaum’s own third-world “development” projects,⁴⁰³ although Augustine would deny that these ‘develop’ anything. Rather, these are *responses of love* that are *concomitant to peace*, and that seek peace from the blighted chaos of human voracity; “for our God made his whole creation very good.”⁴⁰⁴

5. The logic of love reordered

Having seen that Augustine uses a logic of love to ground our responses to the moral order, we have also seen that respect for bodily existence, and love toward precious human others, are integral to Augustine’s account of reordered love. ‘Love’ connotes worship of God, enjoyment of neighbour, and the exclusion of certain behaviours toward those loved. But it remains to be seen how Augustine understands love to become reordered, which will be the subject of this section.

I will show that although affections cannot be commanded, a logic of ‘love poured in’ has the Spirit to pour a love for God into the human heart, with God’s ‘embrace’ also reordering human loves. This ‘pouring in’ is not ours to control; yet participation is accessible in a logic of ‘love commended’, where love for God stretches our horizons, and requires the curtailment of voracious selective sight. I will go on to recount some ‘aspects’ of the agent’s loving participation in moral field, and suggest that the Psalmist’s love of ‘the Law’ is a delight in instruction about the aspects of love. I finally suggest that Augustine’s project reflects Christ’s ‘treasures of the heart’.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., 469, citing Augustine’s letter.

⁴⁰² Ibid., 466,470-71.

⁴⁰³ Martha C. Nussbaum, “Martha C. Nussbaum and Her Critics: An Exchange,” *New Republic* 220 no. 16 (1999); cf. Nussbaum, “Comparing”.

⁴⁰⁴ Augustine, *Conf.*, 148 (VII.12).

a) *Twin 'logics', or grammars, of love's divine reordering*

For Augustine, "otherness" (in Charles Mathewes' phrase) "is already at the base of the self";⁴⁰⁵ more specifically, "at the core of the self is an other, God."⁴⁰⁶ The enjoyment of others requires the prior enjoyment of God. By God's "incorporeal embrace alone", the soul is "filled up and impregnated with true virtues."⁴⁰⁷ Yet in agreement with Christ, each person is invited (by command) actively to participate in the reorientation of love, by obedience to the two great commandments (Mt. 22:37).⁴⁰⁸ The connection between ethics and worship is constituted in *love*. It connotes both worship of God and enjoyment of neighbour, while ruling out a set of postures and behaviours toward these other persons.

This participation in love is like the logic of (say) Matthew 7:7 ("Ask ... seek ... knock ..."). But Augustine knows the obvious objection: love cannot just be commanded, and God's "incorporeal embrace" is required. Thus Augustine also argues the complementary logic of (say) John 3:7-8, where Christ's strange words unnerve and perhaps anger Nicodemus, precisely *because* 'rebirth' is beyond the locus of human control, and *because* its 'midwife', the Spirit, is as untamed as wind. Here is the 'chancy' aspect of Augustine's thought that leaves Nussbaum uneasy: a response of delight and love for God "is summoned up in us by an external call and is not perfectly ours to control."⁴⁰⁹

Yet Augustine does not find either logic incompatible with the other, and he often brings them together in dialectical relationship. The "great work" of a repentant life "no doubt" "belongs to human agency to accomplish, yet it is also a divine gift".⁴¹⁰ The nature of this assistance is *not* mere instruction "in the knowledge of what he ought to avoid and to desire in his actions". On such a Pelagian account, free will is simply tutored to give a "just and pious course of life" that "deserves to attain to the blessedness of eternal life."⁴¹¹ Augustine certainly respects the tutoring power of divine teaching, but he also insists that the Spirit works within us, beyond our 'reach'. The next two subsections examine each facet of this twin logic.

⁴⁰⁵ Mathewes, 214.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., 216.

⁴⁰⁷ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 395 (X.3). Similar declarations are found passim, e.g. 399 (X.6); 419 (X.17).

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid. (X.3). Similar declarations are found passim, e.g. 399 (X.6); 419 (X.17).

⁴⁰⁹ Nussbaum, "Augustine and Dante," 67. This 'chanciness' was touched on above, 104.

⁴¹⁰ Augustine, *De spir. et lit.*, 84 (§2). This derives from Philippians 2:13 ("it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure").

⁴¹¹ Ibid. (§4).

b) *The logic of love poured in*

[W]e are assisted by divine aid towards the achievement of righteousness,—not merely because God has given us a law full of good and holy precepts, but because our very will, without which we cannot do any good thing, is assisted and elevated by the importation of the Spirit of grace ...⁴¹²

Although freedom of will and divine teaching are goods, Pelagians have not grasped that affections truly *cannot* be commanded. The work of the Spirit is radically to do with affective reorientation:

[By the Spirit] there is formed in [a person's] mind a delight in, and a love of, that supreme and unchangeable good which is God, even now while he is still 'walking by faith' and not yet 'by sight;' in order that ... he may conceive an ardent desire to cleave to his Maker, and may burn to enter upon the participation in that true light, that it may go well with him from Him to whom he owes his existence.⁴¹³

By alluding to 2 Corinthians 5:7 ("faith ... sight"), Augustine acknowledges that 'delight' and 'desire' will not at first be without ambiguity and trial, sure though its object may be.⁴¹⁴ He resolves the matter Lewis raised (how can the law be like dental forceps, and also like honey?), by reference to Romans 5:5, where "the love of God" is "poured into our hearts" by the Spirit. This is the key element in divine reordering of human beings: the Spirit pours *a love for God* into the human heart.

However, a concern might be raised over this use of Romans 5:5. By taking the genitive in ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ("the love of God") as grammatically 'objective', human love toward God is made the referent. But as Cranfield notes, despite ἐκκέχυται this is hard to defend in context, since the point is to give assurance of hope despite tribulation. Therefore the majority reading is of a 'subjective' genitive, with God's own love toward people on view.⁴¹⁵ But the verse is completely fundamental to Augustine's account of the key pneumatological change that God brings to the will, and appears in this usage repeatedly throughout his writings.⁴¹⁶ Does the exegetical point constitute a fatal blow?

A meditation on Psalm 36 in *De spiritu et littera* is one of many texts that avert the problem. Augustine celebrates God as the prevenient, proactive lover and preserver of humanity, and in conceptual concord with the modern understanding of Romans 5:5, this love is the locus and glory of God's grace. A string of metaphors, including feasting at

⁴¹² Ibid., 91 (§20).

⁴¹³ Ibid., 84 (§5).

⁴¹⁴ Cf. ibid., 112 (§64).

⁴¹⁵ C.E.B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (I-VIII)* 2 vols, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975), 262 & n.2.

⁴¹⁶ E.g. *En. in Ps.* 87.1; *De nat. et grat.* §67, §84; *I Ep. Ioh. tract.* VI.8-10; VII.6; VIII.12.

God's banquet and drinking at his fountain, picture people in response. Although the Spirit is not here mentioned, this is the conceptual substrate for Augustine's subjective genitive in Romans 5:5. The verse functions as a slogan for what can be easily derived from elsewhere in the Bible,⁴¹⁷ where the Spirit originates human love toward both God and humans. Indeed on Romans 15:30 Cranfield can argue *against* a subjective genitive (the Spirit's love toward humanity), and for a genitive of origin.⁴¹⁸ Augustine's theological 'eisegesis' is, in this case, easily left unchallenged.⁴¹⁹

c) *The logic of love commended*

Augustine's hope that the Spirit will reorder turbulent affections to the love of God, releasing people from voracity and selective sight, opens up a tricky pastoral gap for those who have not yet experienced this reordering. It seems 'chancy'.

Augustine begins to close this gap by speaking of a 'flight' to God: a movement of dependence and humility, spoken in prayer.⁴²⁰ Augustine does not wish this 'flight' to be misunderstood in particularly difficult or inaccessible categories. The *Confessiones* show it worked out in one man's life, and although there is mystery there (the unconverted Augustine's unawareness that God was at work), whoever takes and reads the *Confessiones* can easily do as Augustine did, praying as he prays. Likewise, Brown refers to a Dolbeau sermon delivered in Carthage near the time of Augustine's arrival. Vividly drawing upon the experience of the stadium, he reminds the (apparently young male) listeners of what comes over them there. Simply by watching their friends, and attending to the action, a deep love for the sportsmen and the sport grows. Though mysterious, this is quite accessible.⁴²¹

Hence despite 'the logic of love poured in', there is no embarrassment to commend love; and love can be commended in this way on the understanding that the mysterious changes are themselves divinely gifted. By enjoining his hearers to engage in love for God and for

⁴¹⁷ E.g. Rom. 15:30, Gal. 5:22, Col. 1:8, or 2 Tim. 1:7.

⁴¹⁸ C.E.B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (IX-XVI)* 2 vols, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 776 & n.2.

⁴¹⁹ The appearance of Romans 5:5 at Augustine, *De nat. et grat.*, 144-45 (§67) is a possible exception to this easy acceptance. There, the Spirit's absence or presence is deduced by one's affection toward, or fear of, the law. This might void the Pauline intention to give assurance, collapsing the tension of 2 Corinthians 5:7 (between 'faith' and 'sight'). But the problem is not too severe, since the duty "to pray for such further healing as shall enable us to enjoy full liberty" (Augustine, *De nat. et grat.*, 145, §68) is squarely based upon human nature's "capacity for progress" but only "by God's grace, however, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Nonetheless Augustine's tone offers a valid, if tenuous, ground to his exegetical critic. (The same problem is evident at *I Ep. Ioh. tract.* VIII.12, with VIII.13 offering similar amelioration.)

⁴²⁰ Augustine, *De spir. et lit.*, 105-06 (§51).

⁴²¹ Brown, *Augustine (new edn.)*, 448-49.

others, Augustine understands people simply to be finding the correct response to the reality already before them.

The homilies on John's first epistle work and rework this principle in a variety of ways, since the epistle commends love so 'ardently'.⁴²² "It is by charity that other things come to be rightly loved; then how must itself be loved!"⁴²³ If our life in the world is like a desert wandering, then love "is the fountain which God has been pleased to place here" to sustain our sojourn.⁴²⁴

O'Donovan finds 1 John 4:8 ("Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love") prolifically quoted throughout Augustine's corpus,⁴²⁵ and the homily majors upon it. "God is love"; therefore, love "is God". The linguistics are flawed,⁴²⁶ but Augustine knows the difference between an abstract noun and a personal Trinitarian God.⁴²⁷ Rather, the equivalence graphically expresses God's most striking affection. Thus "to act against love is to act against God"⁴²⁸—and by extension, against the proper ordering of his world.

The outcomes that follow are too numerous to list or examine here. Polemic against loveless religious counterfeit gives way to a conception of rightful, loving worship. The biblical witness of Christ's crucifixion (and incarnation) confirms God's loving nature; thus to be cavalier about love is to scorn not only God's essence, but its foremost historical expression. Pride extinguishes love, humility strengthens it, and certain communal behaviours emerge. Voracious false loves are to be resisted, but the intrinsic goodness of creation is reaffirmed.

An intriguing metaphor, picturing the neck of a skin sack being stretched,⁴²⁹ equates to what we would call the stretching of our 'horizons'. When people apply themselves to John's exhortations, the ordered moral field—the integrity of which is grounded in the God who is

⁴²² Augustine, *Homilies on the First Epistle of John* (416), ed. Philip Schaff, tr. H. Browne, *NPNF 1*, vol. VII (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986; originally published New York, 1888), 513 (VIII.14).

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, 501 (VII.1).

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.* (VII.1).

⁴²⁵ O'Donovan, *Self-Love*, 11.

⁴²⁶ Grammatically, Augustine seems unaware of the applicability of 'Colwell's canon', governing articular subjects and anarthrous predicates in the nominative case.

⁴²⁷ Augustine, *I Ep. Ioh. tract.*, 503 (VII.6)

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.* (VII.5).

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, 485 (IV.6).

love—begins to open before them. Old loves change, and new loves grow. An analysis by O'Donovan further teases out the responses of love to the 'horizons' of the moral field.⁴³⁰

d) 'Aspects' of love

I have shown twin facets of Augustine's grammar, or logic, of the divine reordering of love. However I have not yet developed the other sense of 'the logic of love', where *love has an ordinant logic* and *deliberative logic has its love(s)*.⁴³¹ To do so, I will use O'Donovan's analytic presentation of Augustinian love as a series of 'aspects'. These 'aspects' constitute the love towards which God reorders people. When love is divinely reordered, the lover will love according to each of these aspects.

Augustine uses three important words (*dilectio*, *caritas*, *amor*) sometimes synonymously, and sometimes not. Thus simplistic lexicographical approaches that "label certain motifs by the Latin or Greek words which [modern thinkers] think encapsulate them" are of no assistance for understanding Augustine's love.⁴³² *Dilectio* and *amor* are used indifferently, often for stylistic variation; Augustine notices good and bad senses for them in Scripture.⁴³³ *Caritas* translates the ἀγάπη of 1 John 4:8, and never denotes the inordinate desire for worldly things, while *cupiditas* generally always does.⁴³⁴ Rather, to notice Augustine's 'aspects' of love is to discriminate among love's various responses to the complex order of moral field, since "the loving subject stands in a complex and variable relation to the reality which his love confronts."⁴³⁵

Two such aspects follow the classical tradition. In *cosmic love*, the subject is drawn by her *telos* to the love of God. In *positive love*, the subject self-directs toward some end she has chosen for her happiness. The later Augustine considers his earlier sole reliance upon these aspects of love as a misstep, not least because it generated the ill-advised *uti-frui* distinction, in which persons can all too easily be merely 'used'.⁴³⁶

So two further aspects represent "intermediate possibilities which became increasingly important to Augustine as he continued his search for an 'ordered' love where the subject

⁴³⁰ O'Donovan, *Self-Love*, 18-35.

⁴³¹ See above, 70.

⁴³² O'Donovan, *Self-Love*, 10.

⁴³³ O'Donovan cites *De civ. Dei* XIV.7 and *I Ep. Ioh. tract.* VIII.5.

⁴³⁴ O'Donovan, *Self-Love*, 10-11.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

⁴³⁶ See above, 108.

was neither victim nor master.”⁴³⁷ In *rational love* the subject recognises, in appreciation and approval, a teleology and order which she has not herself imposed.⁴³⁸ Love of lesser goods becomes appropriate, as long they do not displace God. The language of ‘use’ takes on a new connotation. Loving someone ‘for’ God now includes seeking their welfare for their sake; loving ‘for’ God is a way of correctly valuing them without seeking to dethrone God.

Alongside this is *benevolent love* where “the subject, having recognized the objective order of things, may freely affirm it, thus giving the weight of his agency to support an order which he did not devise.”⁴³⁹ It is possible only between creature and creature; it is concerned with an order independent of the subject; and the lover and the beloved are separate. This love is for people’s ‘own sake’—not as a counterpoint to ‘for God’s sake’, but in denial of any personal advantage to the lover. In benevolent love, we acknowledge that others have a destiny given by God, whether or not our own agency is called upon to assist fulfilment of that destiny.⁴⁴⁰

The mature Augustine constantly moves between these four aspects of love:

The choice of means to ends, the admiration of the neighbor’s goodness, the pursuit of the neighbour’s true welfare, all these are the subjective aspects of a single movement of the soul which reflects the one dominant cosmic movement, the return of the created being to its source and supreme good.⁴⁴¹

This does justice to Christ’s two-fold love-command; and “virtue is the conformity of love to the structure of reality.”⁴⁴² Regard for the other, whether divine or human, certainly *accrues benefit* to the self—but simply and only in virtue of the self’s proper engagement with a good reality.

Augustine upholds ‘the logic of love’, then, in a highly nuanced form. That *love has an ordinant logic* and *deliberative logic has its love(s)* can be further understood in terms of these ‘aspects’ that O’Donovan has described. His analysis will prove invaluable in my final chapter, and I will return to it occasionally before then. In what follows, ‘rational’, ‘cosmic’, ‘positive’ and ‘benevolent’ love will retain the senses given in this discussion, without tedious reminders.⁴⁴³

⁴³⁷ O’Donovan, *Self-Love*, 18.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 18, 31.

⁴³⁹ Ibid., 18.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., 34

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., 35-36

⁴⁴² O’Donovan, “Augustinian Ethics,” 47.

⁴⁴³ I will also dispense with the continued use of quotation marks.

e) Law, love, and ‘treasures’ of the heart

I will now pause to note two implications of Augustine’s account of reordered love. Firstly, it sheds light upon the conundrum Lewis found, where the Psalmist’s delight in the law seemed to run counter to the unpleasantness of obeying it (and the pause to note this here is preparatory to a fuller discussion later in the thesis).⁴⁴⁴ Secondly, it gives conceptual content to an Augustinian utterance which is regularly abused for the lack of such content.

On Augustine’s account, the Psalmist’s love for the Law⁴⁴⁵ is no encounter with mere ethical demand. The Psalmist was *not* “ravished by a moral beauty”,⁴⁴⁶ unless we understand ‘ravishment’ to be a kind of synergy, between love and the instructional component of the law. For this component can elicit a delighted response to a moral field centred upon God.

[N]o fruit is good which does not grow from the root of love. If, however, that faith be present which worketh by love, then one begins to delight in the law of God after the inward man, and this delight is the gift of the spirit, not the letter ...⁴⁴⁷

The ‘law’ can be both a dentist’s forceps and sweet honey while love is being reordered; yet in the law, the Psalmist is instructed in the aspects of love. He can love the law, since it frees him rightly to engage with the reality—including God—that surrounds him.

Augustine said, “the soul is carried by its loves”.⁴⁴⁸ Looking to the source of Augustine’s whole project, we recall Christ’s “where your treasure [θησαυρός] is, there your heart [καρδία] will be also.” (Mt. 6:21 & Lk. 13:34).⁴⁴⁹ The language is different, but Augustine’s thought plausibly interprets it if θησαυρός is any object of the affections, and καρδία the seat of the will. (“[I]n man’s heart are his spiritual hands”.⁴⁵⁰)

⁴⁴⁴ See above, 67-70; and see below, 238-240.

⁴⁴⁵ We must unfortunately side-step the interesting matter of Christian theology’s approach to OT law. Briefly: NT authors understand OT law to stand in its entirety—yet since Christ is the *telos* of that law (Rom. 10:4), *continued observance* of some forward-looking aspects of it amounts to *rejection* of Christ. Therefore normatives can only follow from the application of a proper NT and biblical theology. The Reformers’ ‘civil’, ‘moral’ and ‘cultic’ distinction, though intuitively appealing, was not rigorous enough to show how this process proceeds. Christian wisdom might find that the three categories remain, albeit after a more carefully christological and trinitarian explication of how this is so. (That is, Christian readers might find themselves pondering what facets of moral order were highlighted by OT law, and their reading of it might be more akin to the way OT wisdom is read.) Interestingly, that “[I]ove does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law” (Rom. 13:10) resonates strongly with the conclusions of this chapter. See also below, 239 n.733, on the divine command.

⁴⁴⁶ See above, 68.

⁴⁴⁷ Augustine, *De spir. et lit.*, 94 (§26).

⁴⁴⁸ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 487 (XI.28).

⁴⁴⁹ Cf. also Mt. 13:44-46 & 19:21, where a change in θησαυρός drives people to radical new action.

⁴⁵⁰ Augustine, *De nat. et grat.*, 151 (§83).

This assists us to comprehend Augustine's most popular aphorism, "Love and do what you will",⁴⁵¹ which has become a well-worn 'summary' of his ethic and is often used to sanction modern causes in contextualism.⁴⁵² Augustine intended the aphorism to describe how action between people must be ordered by love, understood in its 'aspects'. But the aphorism is seriously misused if used apart from Augustine's logic of love, a logic where the command of God plays a key role in the reordering of love, since the love of various goods is commended to us by God's command.



In this chapter, I have outlined Augustine's approach to ethics and emotion by way of a 'logic of love'. Love is fundamental to our knowledge and behaviour, but love is disordered by voracity and 'selective sight'. However this conception of disorder does not constitute a hatred of the body or of bodily life—indeed, love for human others is integral to Augustine's account of love for God. Reordered love is a divine gift, formed in part by our willing participation in the divinely ordered moral field. I have used O'Donovan to show how such reordered love diffracts into a series of aspects.

Aquinas attempted to complete Augustine's grand vision in the finest possible detail, and Augustine's analysis became amplified into Aquinas' well developed psychology. In chapter following I will examine Aquinas' attempt to refine Augustine in the light of Aristotelian psychology.

⁴⁵¹ Augustine, *I Ep. Ioh. tract.* (VII.8, on 1 Jn 4:4-12).

⁴⁵² O'Donovan, "Augustinian Ethics," 47.

Chapter V: Aquinas' Grand Vision: a 'Christian Moral Organism'

In [Aquinas' account of virtue], inadequacies are remedied by using the Bible and Augustine to transcend the limitations not only of Aristotle but also of Plato ... and by using Aristotle as well as Augustine to articulate some of the detail of the moral life in a way that goes beyond anything furnished by Augustine.⁴⁵³

In the previous chapter, we saw Augustine's 'logic of love'. The purpose of this chapter is to describe Thomas Aquinas' deep interest in this logic, and his utilisation of it to understand the interplay between emotion and ethics. In the seven subsections of the chapter, I will use the *Summa Theologica* to show how Thomas expands Augustine's 'logic of love' by drawing upon and adding to the main lines of Augustine's treatment.

Aquinas shows that with love, certain structures can be discerned. Love refracts into a series of emotional responses, and these responses reflect a complex array of goods within moral order. There is a complex recursive relationship between these responses and moral reasoning. Augustine had already said as much; but Aquinas tells more of the array of goods, the responses to them, and the relationship between these responses and moral reasoning.

Before beginning the investigation proper, I will briefly survey the structure and function of the *Summa* (Section One). Although this thesis focuses on the *Summa's* philosophical anthropology, Thomas only develops his anthropological position to serve his broader ethical intention. My description of how Thomas expands Augustine's 'logic of love' will then proceed as follows.

Humans are each an array of parts and powers, and their 'will' operates as an amalgam of 'intellect' and 'appetite' (Section Two). Human will reaches for humanity's proper end. This will involves intellectual assessments about that end, and is affected by emotional responses to more immediate circumstances (Section Three). These emotional responses reflect the complexity of the moral field, and can be ordinate or inordinate, depending upon their fittingness to humanity's true end (Section Four). Therefore virtue necessarily becomes a central element in moral life, since each virtue is a special amalgam of thought, habit and ordered passion, with all virtues helping people toward their true end (Section Five). But virtue itself requires the power of the Spirit, working through Christ's teaching, to produce 'Christian moral organisms', who are the only kinds of human being to be properly ordered to humanity's true end (Section Six). Equipped with this conception we

⁴⁵³ Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (London: Duckworth, 1990), 140-41.

are better equipped to examine the recursive relationship of emotion to moral reasoning. This reasoning can be misled in various ways by emotion—or it can itself maliciously mislead emotion (Section Seven). I will now pause to outline these sections in slightly more detail.

In Section Two I will examine some categories by which Thomas approaches the problem, and will show Aquinas' account of human parts and powers in their relations. He seamlessly orchestrates various aspects of being human into what I call a *syntagma* of human being, so that human willing is located at the intersection (roughly) of 'intellect' and 'appetite'. Section Three concerns his account of human ends, both with and against Aristotle. Human action is unintelligible without this *telos*. But actions become intelligible when the 'syntagma' operates towards its *telos*.

These sections form the conceptual basis of Thomas's account, and will seem unrelated to emotion until we realise how *appetition* steers people towards ends. Furthermore, Aquinas' use of rationality will seem to preclude emotion, until we understand his distinctive form of 'rationality' and his distinction between passion and affection. For example, 'happiness' is humanity's rational end; but this affection is not really a passion, leading some to think it is not an emotion either. Nor does he generically label various other 'emotions' as 'emotion' (e.g. love, enjoyment, and delight).

Section Four shows how passions involve bodily 'disturbances', as appetite 'moves' a person toward some end. Passions reflect the complexity of the moral field, which has many goods. *Ordinate* passions move the soul to its *proper* end, and all passions can be morally evaluated by the moral visions they serve. Emotional reactions express opinions about good and evil, offering avenues for reflection about one's ethic that may not easily be accessible by other means.

In Section Five, I examine Thomas's account of the relation of virtue to passion. Logically prior to virtue are acts, which are evaluated both by their ends and their nature. Virtue governs appetite (the locus of passion) so that right ends may be chosen, thus producing 'ordinate passion'. The formation of virtue, toward lives populated by a variety of interesting virtues, begins naturally and continues with elements both of 'love commended' and 'love poured in'.

In Section Six, we ascend a kind of 'summit' in the *Summa*, to find the logic of the heart's turn to reordered love. I show how passion is directed by the work of the Spirit (an example of love 'poured in'), and how new loves are 'commended' in Christ's evangelical teaching. Hence a 'Christian moral organism' is formed who responds rightly to God's good order,

and for whom virtues are existentially primary. By the end of this section, the logic MacIntyre's comment (above, page 121) will be clear: Thomas's categories of thought, though Aristotelian, are more primarily grounded in Christian theology.

I will end the chapter in Section Seven by summarising some satisfying discoveries in the *Summa*, particularly Thomas's emphasis upon the immediacy to us of sensory particulars. By way of a personal example I will show that Thomas can move from this immediacy to a lively understanding of the interconnections between emotion and moral reasoning. But central to his account of these interconnections is his main concern—to set out an agenda for personal ethics *within* the teleological givens of the Christian gospel. Although presenting the human good as grounded in a general theory of goodness that rests upon a particular theory of nature, people within nature cannot respond rightly without reason's recognition of its teleological ordination—namely, to love God. But without this qualification, it will seem as if Thomas presents reason as autonomously capable of ethics. I will suggest that Thomas guards against this misconception by describing a class of people for whom moral reasoning takes the form of *certa malitia*, 'resolute malice', which is an intellectual refusal to esteem divine goods over proximal goods. But Thomas's ability to help us ethically is severely curtailed when the *Summa* is read without the qualification and under the misconception. Hence John Calvin finds it necessary to respond to the misconception, whether real or imagined in Thomas, as will be seen in the next chapter.

1. Anthropology and the Summa's ethical intent

Before beginning the investigation proper, I will briefly survey the structure and function of the *Summa*. Although this thesis focuses on the *Summa's* philosophical anthropology, Thomas only develops his anthropological position to serve his broader ethical intentions.

According to MacIntyre, the Aristotelian renaissance of thirteenth century Paris produced an extensive and 'fine-grained' Aristotelian account of order that seemed to render obsolete the bowdlerised Augustinian theology of the day. Thomas was therefore motivated to develop a more consistently theological account of order. To this end, the highly developed theological and philosophical psychology of the *Summa* describes the 'shape' of the soul, its rightful end, and the way action operates as the means to this end. The *Summa* 'decodes' human ethical existence at first globally, and then increasingly in 'fine-grained' detail. Although many of its central conceptions are conventionally Aristotelian, Thomas regularly surprises his Aristotelian readership by transforming those conceptions into something uniquely Christian.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵⁴ This observation is indebted to MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 127-48.

The First Part is effectively a prologue, outlining the theistic universe in which humanity is located. The main substance of the *Summa* is the massively central Second Part that answers general and then specific questions about humanity. The Third Part is a theological meditation upon the place and work of Christ for humanity. The pivotal prologue to the Second Part clearly signals Aquinas' shift to the question of who, and what, is humanity:

Since ... man is said to be made in God's image, in so far as the image implies "an intelligent being endowed with free-will and self-movement": now that we have treated of the exemplar, i.e. God, and of those things which came forth from the power of God in accordance with His will; it remains for us to treat of His image, i.e. man, inasmuch as he too is the principle of his actions, as having free-will and control of his actions. (1a2æ.1.prol.)⁴⁵⁵

Hence the Second Part can be construed as outlining *the correct human responses to divine order*. In this outline, *passion* (particularly understood) furnishes the soul with impetus for its movement forward in action. Given the complexity of the soul and of external reality, 'passion' is many-faceted and virtue is necessary to 'shape' it. But in turn, virtue must itself be 'shaped' by the love that is both poured in and commended.

Mark D. Jordan describes the *Prima Secundae* as "something like a fundamental philosophical anthropology designed to undergird a moral treatment of human life in particular."⁴⁵⁶ These 'particulars', which appear in the *Summa's* second half, are arguably Thomas's main point. But his philosophical anthropology is the main concern of this thesis, since it will enable us to consider the operation of passions and affections in ethics, and to begin to see their relationship to virtue and to moral reasoning.

This primarily ethical intention of the *Summa* has been widely noticed. Jean Porter finds "that an account of action is the common thread" running through the various treatises of its Second Part.⁴⁵⁷ This account of action is not just any kind of account, as Alasdair MacIntyre notices in seeing the *Summa* "forc[ing] us back upon the question of what kind of persons we will have to be or become ... in order to read it aright."⁴⁵⁸ Indeed the *Summa* only offers to account for human action in response to that order entailed by Christian theism. Hence

⁴⁵⁵ References following will abbreviate the *pars* as 1a, 1a2æ, 2a2æ and 3a (with 'supp.' for the supplement to *Tertia Pars*), followed by a number for the relevant question, then 'a' for each article. Article subdivisions will be 'obj' for objections, 'sc' for the *sed contra*, 'c' for the *corpus*, and 'ad' for each answer (and 'prol.' for the occasional prologue near the start of each *pars*): e.g. 1a2æ.109.a7.obj3. Where smaller divisions are not noted the reference should be regarded as passim to the article or question. The older Benzinger Brothers edition, by the Fathers of the Dominican Province (first referenced above, 101 n.345) will be used throughout. (On the decision to use this translation, see below, 159.) For readability references to Augustine occurred both in footnotes and in main text; but references to the *Summa* will be retained only in the main text, also for readability. No attempt will be made to give pagination (in accordance with general practise for Aquinas).

⁴⁵⁶ Mark D. Jordan, "Aquinas's construction of a moral account of the passions," *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 33 no. 1-2 (1986), 86.

⁴⁵⁷ Jean Porter, *The Recovery of Virtue* (London: SPCK, 1990), 70.

⁴⁵⁸ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 133; cf. 129-30.

Servais Pinckaers describes its main concern to be the formation of a “Christian moral organism”.⁴⁵⁹ Similarly, after a close reading of Thomas’s construction of a moral account of the passions, Jordan concludes that “Thomas assumes that his readers, being students of theology, have already been passionately converted to the Gospel.” Thomas’s moral account of the passions is a “pellucid ostension” of the rational control of passion for such a person.⁴⁶⁰

Despite a first impression of overwhelming complexity, the argument actually builds upon itself quite clearly and the *Summa* lends itself to the sequential approach I will employ in this chapter. The emotions are constantly under scrutiny, being central to humanity’s response to the divine order in which people are situated. Thus emotions are woven throughout the *Summa*, since for Aquinas, they are woven through the deepest structures of being human.

2. A syntagma of being human

In this section I will outline Aquinas’ account of human parts and powers in their relations. He seamlessly orchestrates various aspects of being human into what I call a *syntagma* of human being. Human willing is located at the intersection (roughly) of ‘intellect’ and ‘appetite’.

The Aristotelian/Thomist taxonomy of the soul into its various ‘parts’ and ‘powers’ is usually described by the term ‘faculty psychology’. Thomas may or may not be representative of that term’s less tenable connotations, such as that a person is merely a collected set of ‘departments’. Therefore to enable a fresh approach, I will employ the term ‘syntagma’ (which denotes any systematic body, system or group) to describe the totality of the various ‘parts’ and ‘powers’ of the soul and their complex interrelationship. It is this interrelationship, or ‘syntax’, of parts and powers that largely constitutes the human person who operates in the world. To describe the being so constituted as a ‘syntagma’ is to highlight the ‘syntax’ without prejudice as to whether Thomas is guilty of ‘departmentalisation’. (But he is probably not, since “all the soul’s powers are rooted in the one essence of the soul”, 1a2æ.77.a1.c.)

a) Humans as desirous ‘knowers’

Aquinas firstly considers humanity to be by nature a ‘knower’ of the divinely ordered universe:

⁴⁵⁹ Servais Pinckaers, *The Sources of Christian Ethics* tr. Mary Thomas Noble, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1995), 178.

⁴⁶⁰ Jordan, 97.

Since everything is knowable according as it is actual, God, Who is pure act without any admixture of potentiality, is in Himself supremely knowable.

... For there resides in every man a natural desire to know the cause of any effect which he sees; and thence arises wonder in men. But if the intellect of the rational creature could not reach so far as to the first cause of things, the natural desire would remain void. (1a.12.a1)

“[T]he ultimate beatitude of man”, then, “consists in the use of his highest function, which is the operation of his intellect”. This does not mean that human beatitude is *merely* the use of the intellect; rather, the final point is to know God. An outline of this knowledge follows, including how God makes it possible. The bedrock of the syntagma, though, is that human ‘knowers’ are drawn relentlessly to the ‘supremely knowable’, the certainty of which parallels a modern astronomer’s respect for the gravitational force of a black hole.

We are reminded of Augustine’s ‘being, knowledge and love’⁴⁶¹ (even if Aquinas has yet to account for ‘love’). As for Augustine, it follows that in our awareness, the good is contingent upon the true. This is obvious to Aquinas for an ontological and an epistemological reason:

First, because the true is more closely related to being than is good. For the true regards being itself simply and immediately; while the nature of good follows being in so far as being is in some way perfect; for thus it is desirable. Secondly, it is evident from the fact that knowledge naturally precedes appetite. Hence, since the true regards knowledge, but the good regards the appetite, the true must be prior in idea to the good. (1a.16.a4)

That “the true regards being itself simply and immediately” is, of course, a little contentious for moderns. It is beyond our scope to defend the claim other perhaps than to suggest that it is easier to defend in a good divine order than elsewhere. The main point of interest is that “thus it is desirable”. This would seem to be Aquinas’ way of saying, with Augustine, that we love what we see. “As the good denotes that towards which the appetite tends, so the true denotes that towards which the intellect tends” (1a.16.a1.c). We are first knowers of, and then responders to, the order of reality; and hence there follows ethics.

And thus we incidentally discover a major distinction in Aquinas’ syntagma, between intellect and appetite. In fact, intellect is a “cognitive power in the soul” (1a.12.a4.c); cognition is the genus of which intellect is a species. The soul, broadly, is both cognitive and appetitive.

Aquinas also follows Aristotle’s hierarchical view of functionality. Natural, ‘vegetative’ traits (e.g. nutrition and growth) are shared with all living things. With animals, humanity shares a ‘cognitive power’ called *sensation*, and an ‘appetitive power’ called *sensuality* or

⁴⁶¹ See above, 78.

‘sensitive appetite’. Specific to humanity are the ‘rational powers’: a cognitive power called *intellect*, and an appetitive power called *will*.

b) A diagram of the ‘syntagma’

At this point it might be useful to pause and offer a diagram, to assist us better to grasp the developing syntagma. For completeness, additional material on the vegetative power is included, but that is of less interest to us than the powers of sense and intellect:

	COGNITIVE <i>concerned with the true</i>	APPETITIVE <i>concerned with the good</i>
RATIONAL powers: specifically human. <i>For universals.</i>	INTELLECT / REASON	WILL ↗ directed to <i>UNIVERSALS</i> and to a ‘common notion of the good’ (1a.82.5)
SENSIBLE powers Shared only with other animals (higher animals also have a locomotive power). <i>For external particulars</i>	SENSATION	SENSUALITY/ SENSITIVE APPETITE ↗ directed to <i>PARTICULARS</i> Irascible <i>Attacks the harmful, and hindrances to the suitable</i> Concupiscible <i>Acquires the suitable, flees from the harmful</i>
VEGETATIVE powers Shared with all living things. <i>For the body that the soul is united to (1a.78.1.c)</i>	GENERATIVE – <i>the power whereby the body ‘continues’ its existence</i>	
	AUGMENTATIVE – <i>the power whereby the body acquires its due quantity</i>	
	NUTRITIVE – <i>the power whereby the body is preserved in its existence and in its due quantity</i>	

The diagram is not exhaustive. (For example, an ‘apprehensive’ power might be imagined three-dimensionally, as if lying across all the boxes of the grid; it will not help us to attempt to show it, and in any case it does not concern us.) Moving from bottom to top of the diagram shows how in Aquinas’ understanding, the soul’s attention moves further and further beyond the self. (The ‘locomotive’ power should somehow straddle the topmost part of the powers of sense, since higher animals *go to get* objects of sense). Moving from left to right shows how this attention moves from contemplation to action (except for the left-right layout of irascible and concupiscible, which are in recursive relation.⁴⁶²) In the next

⁴⁶² See below, 128f.

paragraphs, to the end of this section, I will explain some of the elements of Aquinas' syntagma. The explanation will be clearer if frequent reference is made to the diagram.

Human action is that which stems from the specifically human powers. The will chooses freely from goals proposed by the intellect, after the intellect considers ends and means. Aquinas will sometimes refer to the 'intellect', and sometimes to 'reason'; but these are not to be distinguished, except insofar as reason is the *process* by which people "advance from one thing understood to another" (1a.79.8), so as to bring understanding.

Modern philosophy argues about whether 'desire', 'passion', 'feeling', and certain forms of motive and intention, should be included under 'emotion'. Aquinas covers all such concepts as 'appetition'—an Aristotelian principle of 'tendency' as applied to the human person.⁴⁶³ When in 1a.80 (esp. a2) Aquinas classifies 'appetitive powers' by a distinction between 'higher', 'intellectual' appetite (the will), and 'lower', 'sensitive' appetite (sensuality), we find he can account for the 'tug' of the external world in all its pluriformity. Both powers tend outside of the self—but the 'intellectual' appetite tends toward universals (e.g. that which is 'good'), and the 'sensitive' appetite tends toward particulars (specifically, the objects of sense). In this, "the higher appetite moves the lower", and so at the outset Aquinas contends that appetite can actually be shaped and governed by the intellect. And yet a little more cryptically when considering how this may relate to 'motive' powers, Aquinas can also say that "the higher appetite moves by means of the lower" because "a universal opinion does not move except by means of a particular opinion". So the relationship between these two, though hierarchical, is also dialectical, or (perhaps better), recursive: desires of sense are somehow shaped by prior 'intellectual' decisions, and yet these decisions can also be shaped by that to which the senses are exposed.

Sensuality is further subdivided into the 'irascible' and 'concupiscible' (1a.81.2). Respectively, one repels the undesirable, and the other pursues the desirable. Anthony Kenny rejects this further 'anatomising' as largely a "forced assimilation" of conceptions by previous thinkers.⁴⁶⁴ But we should rather commend Thomas for his astuteness in retaining

⁴⁶³ Anthony Kenny, *Aquinas on Mind* (London: Routledge, 1993), 59-61.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid., 63. The source has been identified as William of Moerbeke's Latin translation of Aristotle's *De Anima*, with *irascibilis* rendering θυμική and *concupiscibilis* for ἐπιθυμική [in Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica: The Emotions* (Vol. 19, 1a2æ.22-30) ed. Thomas O. Gilby, tr. Eric D'Arcy, (London: Blackfriars; Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1967), xxv]. It is interesting that the respective cognate NT words are used both restrictively and generally: θυμός generally only for 'wrath', but ἐπιθυμία for various strong desires right across the moral spectrum (c.f. Jesus' "I have eagerly desired ...", ἐπιθυμία ἐπεθύμησα, [Lk. 22:15], or Paul's "great eagerness", ἐν πολλῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ [1 Th. 2:17], with the thrice-repeated ἐπιθυμία of 1 Jn 2:16-17, or the adjectivally qualified usages in Col. 3:5 or 2 Pt. 1:4, 2:10). The NT's moral interest is in the object of the desire, not the strength of it. Aquinas' primarily technical and philosophical usage pertains to desire-related 'movements of the soul' prior to any moral evaluation of those movements. Aquinas does engage with the narrower moral usage when he discusses the noun (e.g. in 1a2æ.30): but even then, the discussion stays much wider than its narrowest meaning ('lust'). Moreover, various nuances are

the distinction, noticing as he does that both ‘violent’ and ‘hungry’ feelings strongly impact human decision and action. Indeed, Aquinas has introduced this as groundwork for a far more defensible claim—of significant interest here—that people emote and act in order to protect or accrue or displace whatever they construe to be goods or evils.

Interestingly, the will does not itself contain this irascible-concupiscible distinction. This is because it governs general conceptions of the good, whereas the sensitive appetite can only construe the good in its different aspects. With the single-mindedness of a referee, the will decides for or against sense:

Now the sensitive appetite does not consider the common notion of good, because neither do the senses apprehend the universal. And therefore the parts of the sensitive appetite are differentiated by the different notions of particular good: for the concupiscible regards as proper to it the notion of good, as something pleasant to the senses and suitable to nature: whereas the irascible regards the notion of good as something that wards off and repels what is hurtful. But the will regards good according to the common notion of good, and therefore in the will, which is the intellectual appetite, there is no differentiation of appetitive powers, so that there be in the intellectual appetite an irascible power distinct from a concupiscible power ... (1a.82.5.c)

That there is no significance in the left-right placement of irascible and concupiscible (above) is because Aquinas sees them to be equal and interconnected—or at least, that the grounding of irascence in concupiscence is insignificant. (As Mark Jordan puts it, “[t]he irascible is ... teleologically subordinate to the concupiscible, from which it begins and in which it ends.”⁴⁶⁵)

[T]he irascible is, as it were, the champion and defender of the concupiscible when it rises up against what hinders the acquisition of the suitable things which the concupiscible desires, or against what inflicts harm, from which the concupiscible flies. And for this reason all the passions of the irascible appetite rise from the passions of the concupiscible appetite and terminate in them; for instance, anger rises from sadness, and having wrought vengeance, terminates in joy. (1a.81.2.c)

Aquinas contends that ‘irascible’ and ‘concupiscible’ ‘obey’ reason (1a.81.a3). Given the principle that “the higher appetite moves the lower appetite”, this ‘obedience’ is understood to mean that the intellect has a ‘kingly’ rather than a ‘despotic’ rule over these appetites. We might say it has a ‘right’ to rule, even though that rule is resisted (with Aquinas pointing here to the “other law at work” in Rom. 7:23.) Universal principles held in the intellect are (we might say) ‘processed’ by reason. These principles are applied (via the will) to particular circumstances, hence the appetites receive direction. The account explains why the appetites of animals are immediately responsive to the inputs of sense, while this is not so in humans. As yet, intellect and reason are not called into question; Aquinas will later

found in the occasion, and therefore the morality, of concupiscence.

⁴⁶⁵ Jordan, 89.

discuss their ‘malfunctioning’. But already we can see that this ‘malfunctioning’ would not seem to involve an ‘infection’ of reason by sense; it will be more in the nature of a ‘misleading’ perhaps.

Aquinas thus imagines the human person as a single ‘unicity of substantial form’, to which he can refer in entirety by its distinctively human aspect of rationality.⁴⁶⁶ Rather than the various powers being nested together, there is a subtle interplay between them (which the diagram risks erasing); and “the elements of order, perceived at first in the roughest outline, come to be understood with increasing subtlety and discernment.”⁴⁶⁷ O’Donovan’s description of moral discernment, though belonging to another context, well describes Aquinas’ analysis of the human syntagma.

3. *The human telos and its means*

In the previous section, I have shown Aquinas’ conception of human being as a complex interplay of thought and appetite directed towards various ends. Human action is constituted in appetite towards ends. The left-right orientation of the diagram (on page 127) signalled the soul’s movement from contemplation to action.

Herein lies the conceptual basis of Thomas’s account of the relationship between emotion and ethics, but before moving ahead further to consider his account, it is necessary to pause and consider the ends to which the soul might move, and how the process of this ‘movement’ is what we normally call ‘action’. Human action is unintelligible without a *telos*, but actions become intelligible when the ‘syntagma’ operates towards a *telos*. Normative action is intelligible once we discern what the syntagma is *for*, and towards what ends it might *rightly* be directed.

The function of the irascible and the concupiscible within the syntagma flag the significance of emotion for human functioning; but an account of *telos* is required before Aquinas can expand upon the place of emotion. That is, Aquinas’ account of that to which humans are directed is necessary to and will govern his account of the relationship between emotion and ethics.

a) Why Aristotelian cosmology does not discredit ‘appetition’

As Thomas’s account of a human *telos* unfolds, a problem may present itself to modern readers. He often buttresses his account with simple Aristotelian examples of natural

⁴⁶⁶ Norman Kretzmann and Eleanor Stump, “Aquinas,” in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig, 10 vols., vol. 1 (London: Routledge, 1998), 335.

⁴⁶⁷ O’Donovan, *Resurrection*, 81.

teleology, since the will is teleological; but these examples will seem outmoded to modern minds and may therefore seem to discredit his wider account of a human *telos*.

Kretzmann and Stump succinctly describe how for Thomas the will parallels natural teleology:

[The will is] the most subtle terrestrial instantiation of an utterly universal aspect of creation. Not only every sort of soul but absolutely every form, Aquinas maintains, has some sort of inclination essentially associated with it ... Inclination is the genus of appetite, and appetite is the genus of will.⁴⁶⁸

So fire, “by its form, is inclined to rise, and to generate its like” (1a.81.1.c). The irascible and concupiscible aspects of the appetitive power are also to be seen in fire, which “has a natural inclination, not only to rise from a lower position, which is unsuitable to it, towards a higher position which is suitable, but also to resist whatever destroys or hinders its action” (1a.81.2.c).

When moderns imagine a dismissal of Aquinas’ anthropology can follow—as if over-imagination about the physics of fire makes teleology implausible for a human syntagma—the point is seriously missed. Aristotle and Aquinas were guilty of a much less serious error, by seeing in fire a teleological behaviour more applicable to living things. Aquinas’ syntagma seeks to codify the obvious observation—phenomenological, but surely indubitable—that humans are teleological beings. Whether or not fire should be seen in this way is moot. Human will is “the most subtle terrestrial instantiation” of something teleological. Thus, neither does it follow from the rejection of Aristotelian teleology by modern science that human thought and behaviour is not profoundly appetitive and oriented toward ends. If the point seems obvious, we need only remember how Lyons’ assessment of emotion was made distinctive (among other scientifically oriented accounts) by his willingness to canvas a teleological dimension.⁴⁶⁹

b) Humanity’s true end

In MacIntyre’s description of Aristotelian and Thomist moral logic, “[t]o progress in both moral enquiry and the moral life is ... to progress in understanding *all* the various aspects of that life, rules, precepts, virtues, passions, actions as parts of a single whole.”⁴⁷⁰

Aquinas uses humanity’s true ‘end’ as the organising principle for this ‘single whole’. At first, his treatment of humanity’s end closely parallels Aristotle. But as he proceeds it

⁴⁶⁸ Kretzmann and Stump, 338.

⁴⁶⁹ See above, 31f.

⁴⁷⁰ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 139.

becomes apparent that for Aquinas, the best account of morality's 'single whole' is Christian, not Aristotelian. Aquinas' account of humanity's end therefore illustrates how he makes Aristotelian conceptions become Christian, for the sake of a contemporary Aristotelian readership.⁴⁷¹

"The end," for Aquinas, "is the rule of whatever is ordained to the end" (1a2æ.1.prol.).

That in which a man rests as in his last end, is master of his affections, since he takes therefrom his entire rule of life. Hence of gluttons it is written (Phil. 3:19): "Whose god is their belly": viz. because they place their last end in the pleasures of the belly. Now according to Mt. 6:24, "No man can serve two masters," such, namely, as are not ordained to one another. Therefore it is impossible for one man to have several last ends not ordained to one another. (1a2æ.1.a5.sc)

Of course the belly is an improper end by which to discern order, and the *Summa's* Second Part seeks to ascertain humanity's true *telos*. Thomas's long build-up to the discovery of humanity's true *telos* almost reads like a detective novel.

He begins the search with a eudaimonistic premise. To find whatever brings true and lasting happiness will be to discover humanity's true end. But happiness (1a2æ.1-5) does not consist in bodily goods, of which a variety is considered (1a2æ.2). Neither is delight the essence of happiness, and pleasure certainly is not. Happiness is not primarily found in any operation of the senses, and neither is it shared with animals (1a2æ.3.a3). This process of elimination is familiar terrain to readers of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and for thirteenth-century Parisian Aristotelians, the treatment of happiness so far is uncontroversial.

Having eliminated the 'usual suspects' (bodily goods, delight and pleasure), Aquinas turns to consider how might come about that 'final happiness' which lulls and quenches bodily appetites and desires. Such complete happiness can only be mediated by the soul rather than by the body. Therefore, it must occur in response to something found by the soul, among universals, rather than among sensual particulars (1a2æ.2.a8).

At this point Thomas is reminded of Scriptures such as Jeremiah 9:23-24 ("let those who boast, boast ... that they understand and know me, that I am the LORD"—1a2æ.3.a6-a7), Psalm 103:5 ("Bless the LORD, O my soul ... who satisfies you with good as long as you live"—1a2æ.2.a8), Psalm 73:25 ("Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire other than you"—1a2æ.4.a7), and the other references to personal *telos*

⁴⁷¹ See above, 123.

that abound in Scripture.⁴⁷² These Scriptures solve the problem by discerning among universals a source of happiness that eclipses bodily desires and satisfies the soul.

The logic of Aristotle has been extrapolated to show that God alone is humanity's true end, and that final happiness is found in him. The familiar premises of the *Nichomachean Ethics* have given way to a theological conclusion, and "Aristotle was invoked against Aristotle in the interests of Scripture and Augustine, not because Aquinas was rejecting Aristotelianism, but because he was trying to be a better Aristotelian than Aristotle."⁴⁷³ To so speak of God as the answer to the riddle of human happiness "retrospectively vindicates", in a Pauline and Augustinian mode, "that in Aristotle which had provided a first understanding of the moral life."⁴⁷⁴ T.O. Gilby catches Thomas's mood in this loyal observation:

[T]he treatise is written in his customary rather dead-pan manner; some may have the impression, from a hasty scanning of these pages, that it purveys somewhat sober stuff, doubtless improving, yet civic and Aristotelean and not very generous. Where the leap, the abandon, the fire in face of divinity? They will have missed the climax of each Question, which breaks out of the gates of the City of Reason, not in a desperate sortie, but at full strength and equipment, a theology with all of its philosophy intact.⁴⁷⁵

It is "by His infinite goodness" that God "can perfectly satisfy man's will." God is happy in his essence, but humanity's happiness consists in participation with God (1a2æ.3.a1, esp. ad1). It is in this way that happiness can be considered both as uncreated and created, as both belonging to the soul and outside the soul (1a2æ.2.a7). This participation is mediated by "the vision of the Divine Essence" that is also described as a "union" (1a2æ.3.a8). Happiness fulfils hope when the intellect completes knowledge by vision and comprehension, and when the will delightfully reposes in its beloved object (1a2æ.4.a3). Ethics and virtue are therefore teleologically contingent: biblical 'cleanness' and 'holiness' are for Aquinas the 'rectitude of the will' when duly ordered to the last end (cf. 1a2æ.69.a3.c, end). In addition,

the will of him who sees the Essence of God, of necessity, loves, whatever he loves, in subordination to God; just as the will of him who sees not God's Essence, of necessity, loves whatever he loves, under the common notion of good which he knows. (1a2æ.4.a4)

While bodily perfection is not integral to final happiness (1a2æ.4.a5), bodily disposition to virtue certainly is (1a2æ.4.a6, with Jn 13:17 used in support, where Christ promises a

⁴⁷² E.g. Ps. 17:15; Is. 66:14; Mt. 5:8; Jn 17:3; 1 Cor. 9:24; Heb. 12:14; 2 Tim. 4:7-8; 1 Jn 3:2; & Rev. 14:13.

⁴⁷³ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 137.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 140-41.

⁴⁷⁵ In Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica: Purpose and Happiness* (Vol. 16, 1a2æ.1-5) ed. Thomas O. Gilby. (London: Blackfriars; Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1969), xiv.

blessing to disciples if they do his teaching). With Augustine, Aquinas is adamant that the soul's perfection is necessarily connected to the body. Aquinas limits one corollary, that happiness can be found in this life (1a2æ.5.a3), but allows another, that "one man can be happier than another", since "the more a man enjoys this Good the happier he is", which "happens through his being better disposed or ordered to the enjoyment of Him" (1a2æ.5.a2.c).

The chain of subjects that follows in the *Summa*—acts, decisions, 'passions', habits, virtues and vices, law, gospel—are all "those things by means of which man may advance towards [the] end, or stray from the path" (1a2æ.1.prol.).

c) Action as movement to the end

Why, then, are not all humans well-ordered to their true end, and to final happiness? Aquinas knows that "God could make a will having a right tendency to the end, and at the same time attaining the end"; but "the order of Divine wisdom demands that it should not be thus" for humans. With Romans 4:6 (that "those to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works" are blessed) squaring off against John 13:17 ("you are blessed if you do" what Christ has taught), Aquinas uses Aristotle as referee to conclude that since happiness is so far beyond humans, *movement* to it is necessary. (We might wonder if Aquinas has missed a double meaning in biblical 'blessing' here.) This necessity for movement will translate into ethical activity.

The "many movements" so predicated are called merits, and happiness is the reward (1a2æ.5.a7). But what are these "many movements"? Precisely those acts, decisions, emotions, habits, virtues, precepts, and responses to the gospel that bring forth rectitude of will. Aquinas will proceed to examine these later in the *Summa*.

The point is unambiguous: "Happiness is obtained through works" (1a2æ.5.a7.sc). For Aquinas, this is not Pelagian, but is rather a simple facet of reality. Humans find happiness when their manner of life corresponds to reality as theologically understood.

But before these 'works' can be considered, it is hardly surprising that, true to thoroughgoing form, Aquinas must pause to give an account of work itself; that is, of human action.

There are acts "proper to man as man", the *actus humani*, by which human persons are masters of their actions, through reason and will, and by which they are said to have free-will. These correspond to the specifically human powers that humanity is said to possess. The *actus humani*, and the will that produces them, are the subject of 1a2æ.6-21.

Since humans share sensory abilities with animals, it follows that there are activities done by humans that do not involve this interaction of intellect and will. These are called *actus hominis* by Aquinas, and are “not proper to man as man” (1a2æ.1.a1.c, even though some such acts might be unique to humans).⁴⁷⁶ The passions occur within the locus of *actus hominis*, and are the subject of 1a2æ.22-48.

It might seem problematic to moderns that passion does not inform the *actus humani*, whereas the will does. The problem would reside in the idea of a passionless will, if emotions are at all valuable. But this charge presupposes an equivalence between passion and emotion, and such an equivalence is not held by Thomas Aquinas. We can say this on the basis of his understanding of happiness, which will be described next, and given his important nuancing of ‘passion’, which will be described below (page 136).

d) Passions and ‘emotions’ as different kinds of mover

The current investigation requires that we close in upon Thomas’s discussion of the passions. But interestingly, and very surprisingly for moderns, the reason for closing in upon this discussion is emphatically *not* because his discussion of the passions is a discussion ‘about the emotions’. Rather, we shall find that for Aquinas, passion is a species of our broader genus, emotion. Also, we shall find that Aquinas does not characterise this broader genus.

We have already seen an important example of this. Most people would call happiness an emotion. In Aquinas, it is humanity’s true end. Yet it would never occur to him to call it a *passion*. There is no more ‘movement’ to be had when someone is finally happy, since the subject has ‘arrived’; and ‘passion’ for Aquinas always connotes *change or movement*.

Aquinas will reiterate this by defending ‘enjoyment’ as a function of the appetitive power, but which represents a kind of final fruition that “should calm the appetite with a certain sweetness and delight” (1a2æ.11.a3.c; cf. a3 passim). “To enjoy is to adhere lovingly to something for its own sake.” This aphorism from Augustine is twice-quoted, first (a1) to impress upon us how human appetite can find a final home in the good order of reality; and then surprisingly (a4.sc), to show that this end can be ‘enjoyed’ even when not yet possessed, but in anticipation and prospect, as it were. (Cf. “one is said to possess the end already, when one hopes to possess it”, 1a2æ.69.a1.c.) So we see, with Augustine, a collocation of happiness, love, joy, enjoyment and delight as affections that are all fundamental to this most prosaic treatise about the logic and axiology of human action. As

⁴⁷⁶ Cf. Norman Kretzmann, “Warring Against the Law of My Mind: Aquinas on Romans 7,” in *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*, ed. Thomas V. Morris, (Notre Dame: University Press, 1988), 174.

with Augustine, terms of reference demanding all true ‘love’ to be hungry are implicitly rejected as a reductive error.

It may be the case that there is no place for *passion* in Aquinas’ will. But his wholehearted advocacy of what we would (and he would not) call *emotion*, is indisputable. That passion and emotion are distinct in this way, and that some of what we call emotion (viz. love, enjoyment, delight etc.) is simply not labelled as generically so by Aquinas, will explain deep confusions among those who comment on him in this matter. In this so-called ‘Treatise on the Passions’, D’Arcy opts to translate *passiones animae* as ‘emotions’, but in the full knowledge that the ‘best’ English word would lie somewhere between ‘passions’ and ‘emotions’.⁴⁷⁷

‘Passion’ is a different kind of ‘mover’ for the soul than is happiness, delight and enjoyment—experiences that we (but not Thomas) would call ‘emotional’. But in order to sustain this point I will need to elucidate his analysis of passion, which at some points seems to make passion coextensive with emotion or with affection.

4. *Passion: mover of the soul*

In this section I will show how Aquinas’ passions involve bodily ‘disturbances’, as appetite ‘moves’ a person toward some end. Passions reflect the complexity of the moral field, which has many goods. *Ordinate* passions move soul to its *proper* end, and passions can be morally evaluated by the moral visions they serve. These reactions express opinions about good and evil, offering avenues for reflection about one’s ethic that may not easily be accessible by other means.

Thomas has clearly signalled the passions as integral to human functioning. In his reading of human experience, the ‘freedom’ of the will is sometimes augmented, sometimes compromised, by them. His account of them prepares for his examination of virtue.

His understanding of emotional life represents experiences of contentment with goods, and other experiences of a conflict between goods both present and absent. This is, of course, an Augustinian substrate. But his labels here will prove a little different to our own (and Augustine’s).

⁴⁷⁷ Aquinas, *Summa* (*Blackfriars* 19), xix-xx. Indeed this is an interesting discussion of the problem in general. ‘Affection’ is rejected as obviously inappropriate for negatives such as despair or fear; ‘feelings’ are seen to be too wide; and the point is made that for Thomas, the passions are object-oriented. D’Arcy also notices the clear connection between passion and passivity, which shall be considered below, 137. But for my decision to retain the older Benzinger Brothers edition by the Dominican Fathers, see below, 159.

Aquinas understands ‘passion’ (and ‘passivity’) in connection with the soul’s power of appetite. In 1a2æ.22.a2, Augustine’s discussion of passion (*De civitate Dei* IX) is used to bolster the case for passion as a function of the appetitive part of the soul (rather than its apprehensive part). This appetitive power orders things for the soul “as they are in themselves” (1a2æ.22.a2.c), determining for it whether they are good or evil, and so becoming “the principle of the exterior action” by which “we come into contact with things” (ad2).

Therefore in Thomas’s description, passion is located very near to the will, but is not to be confused with *voluntas* as such. This ‘very near’ is precisely because passion is located in the *sensitive* appetite, whereas *voluntas* is the *rational* appetitive power, and as Aquinas says, “the sensitive appetite is nearer than the outward members to the reason and will”, 1a2æ.24.a1.c. (A slight oversimplification is necessary to sustain these assertions, since at one point passion is associated with ‘knowing’, which suggests that it inheres in the sensitive *and* in the rational appetite. But I will show how Aquinas himself justifies my oversimplification.)

Contrary to modern thought, we find that ‘passivity’ describes the *active intentionality* of passion: to want, to desire, to long for something, is an aspect of the soul at work. But on the basis of the distinction between passion and will, Aquinas denies that the ‘passive’ aspect of passion somehow implies the surrender of choice. Yet the closeness of the relationship between passion and will also means that passion is to find its ordering within the bounds of reason, and once ordered, passion may rightly reinforce reason to assist the will toward good ends.

a) Nuancing ‘passion’

We need pause and note Thomas’s understanding of a ‘weak’ and a ‘strong’ sense to the word ‘passion’, and his preference for it to be understood in the ‘strong’ sense.

A discussion in 1a2æ.22.a1.c is driven by Romans 7:5. What account can be given for Paul’s understanding of passion as being ‘in’ the soul (since Paul describes “the passions of sin”⁴⁷⁸)? Thomas describes two broad uses for the word ‘passion’ (although he calls them three uses, subdividing the second).

The first “general” use refers to the kind of change or ‘movement’ that occurs when something is filled up, completed, or perfected. Since this *is* a change or movement, then

⁴⁷⁸ That is, since passions are ‘of’ sin, sin must be ‘in’ the soul. The logic follows from Thomas’s anti-Manichean commitment—the *body* is not itself to be blamed for sin.

technically, it is a passion. But it is 'passion' in a non-moral mode, and is related to cognition, as when the soul 'receives' new knowledge; and Thomas can even refer to 'feeling' in this connection. This kind of passion is less intense because less potentiality is involved. Aristotle is Thomas's source for this understanding of passion.

But there is a second use of the word that Aquinas takes to be "its proper sense". In this "proper" use a *subtraction* occurs, even if something else is being received. The strongest and "most proper acceptation" of this sense represents a response to situations where "from a more excellent thing, a less excellent is generated", which is to say, where *some essential good* is subtracted. Hence there is a moral aspect to this use. Moreover unlike the first sense, this is the respect in which passion involves "bodily transmutation". In these responses of the sensual appetite to good and evil, passion is more intense because great potentialities are involved. Augustine is Thomas's source for this sense, *a sense that very much seems to be Thomas's preferred usage*.

Commenting upon Augustine's treatment, Aquinas says that "the passions of the soul are the same as affections" (*passiones animae sunt idem quod affectiones*, 1a2æ.22.a2.sc). But in fact Aquinas is capitalising upon the very point that Augustine was making: that *passiones animae* has a broad range of meaning. However whereas Augustine uses this observation to secure claims about a real consensus between argumentative Hellenistic philosophers, Aquinas has moved from Augustine's observation to a closer understanding of the uses of *passio*.

Therefore in 1a2æ.22.a3.ad1, people can be "well affected towards" and "united ... by love" to 'divine things' (*affectio ad divina, et conjunctio ad ipsa per amorem*), "without any alteration in the body." The context leaves open whether this 'affection' and 'love' is an operation of the sensitive, or of the intellectual, appetite. But beyond doubt, said affection and union by love is *not* an example of passion in its *strong* sense, since there is no alteration in the body.

Mark Jordan has noticed something related. Firstly, Jordan shows that while Aquinas seeks to co-ordinate sources in Aristotle and Augustine, Augustine remains the *controlling* authority in this section.⁴⁷⁹ Secondly, Jordan sees that although a single power (the appetitive) is on view, Thomas distinguishes two movements within it, where "one is like

⁴⁷⁹ Jordan, 75-76, 79-80.

rest, the other like motion” (just as we have seen in the two senses of passion); and the prevailing tendency of passion is toward the inclinations of the sensitive appetite.⁴⁸⁰

Although this nuancing of passion might seem pedantic, it is very relevant to what follows since we shall see Thomas describe joy (for example) as both a passion and as non-passionate. There is no contradiction here: joy can be a passion in the ‘general’ or weak or technical sense, but not in the ‘proper’ sense. (Again, we need to remember that this in no way diminishes the ‘joyfulness’ of joy, given the differences we are seeing between passion, emotion and affection.) Furthermore it is the ‘proper’ sense that is under discussion when Thomas develops his moral account of the passions. Passions as ‘properly’ understood are all the more interesting in that they are not ‘simple’.

b) Simplicity and passivity

Thomas resolves that ‘passion’ (strong sense) is in the soul, but accidental to it. That it is *in* the soul seems clear enough, because it has to do with appetition. But that it is *accidental* to the soul is confusing to us: we find it hard to see how something seemingly as integral as ‘passion’ can yet be an accident rather than an essence. This might represent a major dispute with Augustine, who thought of being, knowing *and loving* as essential to the soul.

However Aquinas does understand love and joy (like happiness and enjoyment) not to be accidental, but rather essential, to the soul. Love and joy are uncomplicated responses to the soul’s true end, and so are “simple acts of the will ... without passion” (1a2æ.22.a3.ad3).⁴⁸¹ They are certainly “without passion” in the ‘proper’ sense, but also because in some circumstances, each is free from what Augustine’s debate termed ‘disturbance’. Instead of ‘disturbance’ Aquinas speaks of Aristotelian ‘simplicity’ and ‘passivity’.

Passion is passion insofar as it is not ‘simple’. By this is meant that there exists a potential for action. “Passion is a kind of movement” (1a2æ.23.a2.c), and “sorrow is more properly a passion than joy” (1a2æ.22.a1.c) since in sorrow, the potential movement to regain what was lost is greater than the potential for movement in joy, where what is desired is already received, or nearly so. Indeed, love and joy are contrasted to passion since they are states that obtain when no action is called forth. What was desired is now received. Moreover, it follows that in such states there is no conflict of goods. Conversely situations are not simple when more than one good is sought after; hence in response, passion is heightened.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., 88.

⁴⁸¹ For one reader of D’Arcy’s translation, a major distortion follows from D’Arcy’s trivial “simply ... acts of the will”. Aquinas’ ‘simple’ is not English’s ‘simply’. See below, 159.

An elegant statement uses ‘passibility’ and ‘passivity’ to explain this ‘non-simplicity’ (and hints at the direction he will take to account for the seeming strength of some passions, even when their objects are relatively unimportant in comparison to the beatific vision):⁴⁸²

Intensity of passion depends not only on the power of the agent, but also on the passibility of the patient: because things that are disposed to passion, suffer much even from petty agents. Therefore although the object of the intellectual appetite has greater activity than the object of the sensitive appetite, yet the sensitive appetite is more passive. (1a2æ.22.a3.ad2)

In the same way that a magnet is an ‘agent’ that draws iron filings to itself, so also the object of a passion is an ‘agent’ that draws its ‘patient’ to itself—even though the ‘patient’ is simultaneously an active human chooser.

We can add some illustrations. A person gazing at a splendid work of art feels a deep satisfaction that reflects, Aquinas might say, the activity of the soul’s appetite. Yet he would not regard the experience as ‘passionate’ —at least, not in the strong sense of ‘passion’—and any strong passions that were felt would reflect whatever potentialities the artwork suggested to the person—for example, the possibility of ownership, whether through purchase or theft. (Passion ‘properly’ understood may or may not become manifest toward the subject matter. If the artwork was a painting of a beautiful scene, the longing or craving to hike there might be passionate, while an awed wonderment at the beauty of the place would not, since there can be enjoyment without possession.⁴⁸³) But consider an erotically passionate gaze toward a beautiful person: it is passionate, precisely because the other seems replete with various potentials. For Aquinas, this too is the appetitive power of the soul at work, but accompanied by intense passion.

These illustrations show the appeal of Aquinas’ syntagma, where appetite is ‘essential’ to the soul, but passion only an ‘accident’.

Now passion pertains to defect, because it belongs to a thing according as it is in potentiality. Wherefore in those things that approach to the Supreme Perfection, i.e. to God, there is but little potentiality and passion: while in other things, consequently, there is more. (1a2æ.22.2.ad1)

The ‘defect’ here may also invite our misunderstanding. Aquinas does not simply equate passion with pursuit of evil. The proposal is quite different, and the ‘defect’ concerns the degree to which a thing has potentiality: passion is strong in reference to such things. But for more perfect things—that is, things that display less ‘potentiality’—the less intensely ‘passionate’ is the soul’s appetite of it.

⁴⁸² This is quite evident, for example, in the answer to “[w]hether bodily and sensible pleasures are greater than spiritual and intellectual pleasures” (1a2æ.31.a5; & cf. a6 on the ‘greater’ pleasures of touch).

⁴⁸³ Cf. above, 135.

Thus non-simplicity concerns the degree to which the soul is in movement toward some good, and the number of goods, though possibly conflicting, toward which it attends. The less simple the emotion, the more passionate it is; and so the degree of simplicity represents a non-moral axis for analysing passion. (There is a moral axis to this analysis: the less in accord with the soul's true end a passion is, the more inordinate, and so evil, it is. I will discuss this axis below, on page 144.)

Aquinas invites three modern misreadings here.

Firstly: if modern readers were to smirk at Aristotelian simplicity being used in this way, they should first pause to reflect upon references in modern psychology to distressed clients, where metaphors rely upon non-simplicity. Such people are 'conflicted', 'divided', or 'not integrated'. What is meant by this is precisely what Aquinas means: sometimes, that a desired good is absent while at other times, mutually exclusive goods are desired. Yet experiences of well-being, such as love and joy, do not readily attract such metaphors of division. (We shall see in a moment, in extension of this point, how Thomas makes especial sense of anger.)

Secondly: modern readers will be unnerved that 'passion' is understood as a function of the soul's 'passivity'. But we misunderstand the significance of this 'passivity' if we construe it in modern terms—either literally, as if Aquinas saw passivity as a puny quietism; or conversely as if he meant us merely to be 'passive' hostages of strong, raging and uncontrollable passions. The subject-object relations of Aristotelian logic can seem to us quite reversed. When a final cause is operative, 'passivity' is basically opposite to modern usage; in Aquinas, it is similar to the soul's 'weight', or momentum, as in Augustine.⁴⁸⁴ This is only offensive when this 'weight' is considered entirely to be self-generated: that would be grounds for a substantive disagreement.

Thirdly: if the subtle interplay between passivity and simplicity is not taken into account, there can be no understanding of how it is that Aquinas does not understand love and joy to be 'passion'. This is Solomon's misunderstanding, when he refers to

the curious observation that the highest virtues, such as love, hope, and faith, were not classified as emotions as such, but were rather elevated to a higher status and often (e.g., by Thomas Aquinas) equated with reason. The old master-slave metaphor [of reason over passion] remained alive and well, and as some emotions were seen as sins, the highest virtues could hardly be counted among the mere emotions.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸⁴ See above, 79.

⁴⁸⁵ Solomon, "Philosophy of Emotions," 6.

Thus Thomas Aquinas is made similar to Immanuel Kant. But the criticism in the final sentence only works if Aquinas is required to think of ‘emotion’ as we do. Rather than depositing all experiences within the same bucket, he is interested to understand them as inordinate passion, as ordinate passion, and as something unmixed and ‘simple’ (therefore only ‘passionate’ in a weak sense). Thus his project is fundamentally ethical. Solomon knows this, having introduced his comment to illustrate a “tight [medieval] linkage between the study of emotion and ethics”.⁴⁸⁶ Indeed Solomon is not unsubtle concerning differences between ‘passion’ and ‘emotion’, nor is he slow to notice that moderns understand words differently to ancients and medievals. But he is in good company (as we shall see⁴⁸⁷) when he thinks Aquinas excludes love and joy from *emotion*. Aquinas does not; he excludes them from *passion*. Dixon’s objection to Solomon remains solid here: although Aquinas does not overtly describe love, joy and happiness as ‘affection’, they certainly remain highly ‘affectionate’.

c) Principal passions, and anger

Disconcertingly however, love can also be discussed as a passion (1a2æ.23), and is explicitly defended later as a passion (1a2æ.26.a2). But this is because love can also cause movement toward a good end, making it a ‘passion’ in the ‘weak’ sense. The “four principal passions” will include joy and love (1a2æ.25.a4). These remain ‘passions’ (weak sense) insofar as they imply some sort of change or movement. Insofar as they harmonise with the soul’s true end, each is a ‘simpler’ kind of passion than more ‘negative’ passions (1a2æ.22). Therefore love (for example) can be construed in some circumstances as a non-passionate affection; whereas in other circumstances it is a passion of sorts. A judgment between these alternatives (were one necessary) would require an overall circumstantial assessment including the degree of simplicity, the potentialities remaining to be realised, and the degree of bodily transmutation elicited.

In 1a2æ.23.a1 Aquinas returns to the ‘irascible’-‘concupiscible’ distinction, which has previously been flagged as integral to human functioning, but whose function can now be delineated with clarity. A reliable kernel to Kenny’s objection⁴⁸⁸ might be that the distinction hypostasises aspects of human behaviour. But that is less important than the use Aquinas makes of the distinction, for he uses it to find the differing ‘flavours’ of certain passions. He names joy, sorrow, love and hatred as passions that have a certain straightforwardness—they evaluate an object. On the other hand, daring, fear and hope

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷ See ‘The immediacy of particulars’ below, 159f.

⁴⁸⁸ Kenny, *Mind*, 63; see above, 128.

concern the path toward (or away from) an object. That is, some passions are more concerned with problems of action.⁴⁸⁹ Aquinas concludes with an abrupt summary:

[T]here are altogether eleven passions differing specifically; six in the concupiscible faculty [love and hatred, desire and aversion, joy and sadness], and five in the irascible [hope and despair, fear and daring, anger which has no contrary]; and under these all the passions of the soul are contained.

This conclusion is further reworked in 1a2æ.25; and although the mechanics of the reworking might seem forced to us, the resulting “four principal passions”—joy, sadness, hope and fear—retain a certain elegant force. The appeal for Aquinas is in their symmetry and finality—that all other passions finally resolve into one of these, with the first pair pertaining to objects-as-ends, and the second pair to paths-toward-objects. We should also pause to note the sensitive portrayal of anger within this schema.

The passion of anger is peculiar in this, that it cannot have a contrary ... For anger is caused by a difficult evil already present: and when such an evil is present, the appetite must needs either succumb, so that it does not go beyond the limits of ‘sadness,’ which is a concupiscible passion; or else it has a movement of attack on the hurtful evil, which movement is that of ‘anger.’ But it cannot have a movement of withdrawal: because the evil is supposed to be already present or past. (1a2æ.23.a3.c)

Again, here is an interesting anticipation of the modern therapeutically-oriented typologies that understand anger sometimes to be a ‘masking emotion’. On this view, therapist and client are tasked to ‘uncover’ ‘underlying’ sadness, or hopelessness, etc. If no such sadness is discerned, client and counsellor might switch to another view of the anger—that it is a basic and irreducible defence by the client, in view of his or her own (God-given) preciousness.⁴⁹⁰

By any estimate, Aquinas’ insight into the nature of anger is striking, and at this point the view that the soul has its irascible and concupiscible projects is actually quite illuminating. Quite simply, anger is presented as an accompaniment to the soul’s attempt to dispose of a sad object. Anger would seem to melt away into sadness when all avenues for such attempts are proven blocked. His later refinement will argue that anger is “a concurrence of several passions, because the movement of anger does not arise save on account of some pain inflicted, and unless there be desire and hope of revenge” (1a2æ.46.a1.c). Also, reason is integral to anger (1a2æ.46.a4). Again, the subtlety here might surprise, if it is not yet clear

⁴⁸⁹ Whether or not to consign joy etc. to the soul’s concupiscible appetite, and daring etc. to the soul’s irascible appetite, is a moot point. What is of interest is the estimate that emotions are complicated by the degree to which action is in view.

⁴⁹⁰ Moreover, Aquinas’ reference to ‘evil’ in the passage quoted flags a debate to be had with any therapy that claims intelligibility for anger, but without reference to some conception of evil. That is, his analysis of anger implies a dispute with any therapy which claims to proceed in disavowal of moral knowledge. Given such a disavowal, the therapy must either declare anger to be trivial; or if it respects anger, its account of anger will be incoherent, deceitful, or both.

what a highly astute commentator Aquinas is on the interactions between human interiority, the value of the external world, and the human will to act in it.

Even if this is not an exhaustive account of anger, most people could remember enough corroborative examples to make it comprehensive. There is a significance for ethics: angry action can be evaluated by further consideration of the ‘sad object’ it seeks to avoid; and more specifically, the ‘justice’ it seeks to achieve (cf. 1a2æ.46.a2.sc). That is, what is ‘sad’ about the anger’s object? What wider moral commitments render the existing situation ‘unjust’? (Better here perhaps might be the term ‘unfair’, which can include those claims to missing goods as perceived by a single subject, to the exclusion of some other valid claim.)

d) Moral evaluation of emotion

Of course a moral account of the emotions must fundamentally decide whether emotions are themselves ‘good’, ‘bad’ or non-moral. Aquinas wrestles with this matter in reference to the passions in 1a2æ.24.a1, where the objections point to the non-rational, animal nature of the passions to argue that they should attract neither blame nor praise. In reply Aquinas cites Augustine, where passions “are evil if our love is evil, good if our love is good” (*De civitate Dei* XIV.7). Aquinas adds that while a ‘raw’ emotion would be morally neutral, there is never any such thing in the human person, who has a rational will either to command the passions or to check them. Therefore passions are said to be voluntary, and Aquinas offers an interesting clarification of his syntagma:

[T]he sensitive appetite is nearer than the outward members to the reason and will; and yet movements and actions of the outward members are morally good or evil, inasmuch as they are voluntary.

The sensitive appetite, then, is seen to lie ‘between’ reason and action. Abstracted away from this relation, the passions may ‘in themselves’ be morally neutral. But they are not so abstracted: the will and reason are under our control, our actions are under our control, and being ‘locked’ within this ‘matrix’ the passions are part of a total ‘package’ open to moral evaluation (hence the citation from Augustine).

“Even the lower appetitive powers are called rational, in so far as ‘they partake of reason in some sort’” (1a2æ.24.a1.ad2). The claim is a little startling, suggesting that *every* desire is open to moral evaluation. Yet even so, Aquinas steadfastly refuses to drift into Manicheism. In 1a2æ.24.a2 Aquinas again follows Augustine to reject the view that passions are evil of themselves. Rather, this Augustinian line of argument holds that passions *serve broader moral visions and are to be evaluated accordingly*. Aquinas’ brief quote salutes the highly important *De civitate Dei* XIV.9, where Augustine evaluates the operation of passions for “the citizens of the holy city of God, who live according to God in the pilgrimage of this

life”. The analysis, rich in scriptural attestation, depicts passions that are shaped by the destinies and values of that city.

In 1a2æ.24.a4, this kind of view is repeated in a different kind of way. There, ‘pity’ and ‘envy’ are offered as examples of good and evil passions respectively, precisely because the words themselves signify this wider moral field: pity is an emotion that concerns the good of another, whereas envy despises it. Aquinas remains consistent here, having explained that ‘on their own’ such passions are morally neutral, but take on moral shades once their object is in view. In their ‘non-simplicity’ then, passions can also be ‘inordinate’, corrupting the soul by the degree to which they represent the soul favouring some good over another, greater good. (This is something like what in Augustine I called ‘selective sight’.) By contrast, *ordinate* passions help the soul to be moved toward its proper end.

The objections of 1a2æ.24.a3 claim that the goodness of an act decreases in proportion to the passion that accompanies it. Aquinas deftly reverses this proto-Kantianism by arguing for what we might call a ‘holistic’ view—that where reason, passion and action are in concert, the rightness of the act is enhanced—which prefigures his view of what constitutes virtue. Psalm 84:2b (“my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God”) bears interesting witness to the view. In the later discussion of pleasure, the disavowal of Manicheism remains evident—so much so that we are almost startled by Aquinas’ directness: “since the desires of good actions are good, and of evil actions, evil; much more are the pleasures of good actions good, and those of evil actions evil” (1a2æ.34.a1.c).

e) Impassibility?

Within this argument, 1a2æ.24.a3.obj2 and its answer become very significant in light of the modern ‘passibility of God’ debate. As we observed with Augustine,⁴⁹¹ a simplistic argument might be made from the impassibility of God to a conclusion that human passion is an evil, perhaps on the basis of the *imago dei*; or, as in obj. 2, on the basis of the *imitatio dei* of Ephesians 5:2. Modern theological anthropology may assume that positive estimates of human emotion can only be secured when Greek conceptions of divine impassibility have been overturned in favour of a ‘suffering God’.

The theological side of this investigation is surely significant. However, it is equally significant that Aquinas, whose view of God’s nature in this respect is hardly ambiguous, can say:

⁴⁹¹ See above, 106f.

In God ... there is no sensitive appetite, nor again bodily members: and so in [him] good does not depend on the right ordering of passions or of bodily actions, as it does in us. (1a2æ.24.a3.ad2)

In this arena, the simple disjunction between human and divine constitution answers all comers.⁴⁹² Admittedly, this is partly because for Aquinas the *imago dei* has been settled as a question of rationality, a view we might wish to argue. But the main element of this answer is that between human creatures and their Creator is “only pure teleological relation, unqualified by any generic equivalence ... an ordering-to in which there is no element of ordering-alongside.”⁴⁹³ No *analogia entis* operates at this point. It is equally significant that Augustine (upon whose authority Aquinas is almost entirely dependent here) settles the question with equivalent ease, and without the same Aristotelian commitments as in Aquinas.

f) Enjoying each other

After deducing the four principal passions,⁴⁹⁴ Aquinas proceeds to refine the passions—first the concupiscible (1a2æ.26-39: love and hatred; desire and aversion; pleasure and sadness), and then the irascible (1a2æ.40-48: hope and despair; fear and daring; and anger). An increasingly ‘fine-grain’ is obvious in articles such as “whether [sorrow] is assuaged by sleep and baths?”, “whether hope abounds in young men and drunkards?” and “whether a person’s defect is a reason for being more easily angry with him?”

The significance of the passions for ethics is equally clear in articles such as “whether doing good to another is a cause of pleasure?”, “whether love conduces to action?” and “whether [fear] hinders action?” However, until we arrive at the treatment of ‘virtue’, the main work for ethics has already been done. But the section has some helpful clarifications and a few surprises.

The usual Aristotelian categories are pressed into service in 1a2æ26.a4.c to give the helpful conclusion that persons are to be loved as ‘ends in themselves’ (so to speak). To paraphrase Aquinas, this is a primary friendship-type-love, as opposed to the secondary concupiscible-type-love that has non-personal goods as its object. We are reminded of Augustine’s tussle over *uti* and *frui*, and of the mature Augustine’s formulation, that people are to be enjoyed “in God”.⁴⁹⁵ “Accordingly, man has love of concupiscence towards the good that he wishes to another, and love of friendship towards him to whom he wishes good. ... [T]hat which is

⁴⁹² This is even clearer in the very blunt 1a2æ.59.a5.ad3.

⁴⁹³ O’Donovan, *Resurrection*, 33.

⁴⁹⁴ See above, 143.

⁴⁹⁵ See above, 108f.

loved with the love of friendship is loved simply and for itself”.⁴⁹⁶ To enjoy people in this way complements, rather than violates, the supervening divine moral order.

g) Love: the weight of the soul

If there remains any doubt by now over whether Aquinas shares with Augustine the primacy of love alongside being and knowledge, the doubt is laid to rest when sweeping statements are made concerning love. “All the other emotions of the soul are caused by love” (1a2æ.27.a4.sc), including even hatred (1a2æ.29.a2). Significantly for ethics, “every agent, whatever it be, does every action from love of some kind” (1a2æ.28.a6.c). This is Augustinian bedrock, from *De civitate Dei* XIV, which is quoted repeatedly throughout 1a2æ.26-48. But “love demands some apprehension of the good that is loved” (1a2æ.27.a2.c), meaning that knowledge is required before love can make its ‘choices’. This reprises the position already recounted: that passions react, respond to and require prior moral commitments.

“[W]hen we love a thing, by desiring it, we apprehend it as belonging to our well-being.” (1a2æ.28.a1.c); therefore “[e]vil is never loved except under the aspect of good” (1a2æ.27.a1.ad1). That is, love is always directed to a good, but the estimate of good can be ‘blinkered’ from the wider field of view. Aquinas will later use this kind of approach to arbitrate between Stoics and Epicureans on the morality of pleasure (1a2æ.34.a2); and hate is also assessed along these lines:

[I]n the animal appetite, or in the intellectual appetite, love is a certain harmony of the appetite with that which is apprehended as suitable; while hatred is dissonance of the appetite from that which is apprehended as repugnant and hurtful. Now, just as whatever is suitable, as such, bears the aspect of good; so whatever is repugnant, as such, bears the aspect of evil. And therefore, just as good is the object of love, so evil is the object of hatred. (1a2æ.29.a1.c)

This anticipates the kernel of truth in the ‘boos and hoorays’ of modern emotivist accounts of ethics. To react to something emotionally *is* (in part) to express an opinion about good and evil. Love, hate and the like offer a ‘window’ into one’s moral commitments: some occurrences of emotion offer an avenue for reflection about one’s ethic that is not as easily accessible by other means. Perhaps this would meet with the cautious approval of Aquinas (and even the enthusiastic approval of Augustine given *De civitate Dei* IX & XIX).

⁴⁹⁶ Aquinas offers further account of both friendship and disharmony in a later discussion on love’s propensity toward ‘likeness’ (1a2æ.27.a3). But his commitment to people as ends in themselves, and implicitly to personal relationships, is never clearer than when the simple facts of human relationships subvert his best efforts to analyse them. In answering ‘whether the actions of others are a cause of pleasure to us’ (1a2æ.32.a5), Aquinas points to “the fact that we obtain some good through the action of another.” Why is this? Because “in this way, the actions of those who do some good to us, are pleasing to us”—for what reason?—“since it is pleasant to be benefited by another.” This can only raise an appreciative smile.

It is obvious on this view that the locus of a person's pleasure becomes a key test of their moral commitments. Since "the repose of the will and of every appetite in the good is pleasure", then "that man is good and virtuous, who takes pleasure in the works of virtue; and that man evil, who takes pleasure in evil works" (1a2æ.34.a4.c). This is not the mere truism that, out of context, it may appear. Rather, pleasure is transcended for a kind of reflection that asks, 'why *am* I shaped *this* way? What *makes* my pleasures pleasant?' The power of Aquinas at this point is precisely in the consistent refusal to decry pleasure, and other passions, as such; that '*they*' are morally neutral, while '*I*' am not, means that '*they*' can be used for insights into what '*I*' believe. Perhaps also we are put in mind of the same kind of transcendental questioning invited by the words of Christ in Matthew 6:21 ("where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"), and 12:33-35 (of good and bad "trees" and their "fruit").

There may be some other ethical implications hidden in 1a2æ.26-48, but it has to be said that in the main, these questions concern the 'mechanics' of the passions in Aristotelian perspective. While there are many canny observations about various common experiences in the emotional life, most are not directly relevant to ethics.

We do however see some hints of the next major movement in the *Summa*. That "no virtue is a passion" (1a2æ.41.a1.obj1; cf. 1a2æ.45.a1.obj1) intrigues us. Given that in Aquinas virtue is a lynchpin in the account of moral life, and given the preceding steadfast refusal to condemn passion, it remains to be seen what the one has to say to the other.

5. *Virtue: shaper of passion*

We are now in a position to see the centrality of virtue for Thomas in his explication of ethics. Given his method thus far, it would be odd for Thomas simply to analyse specific acts or laws, without considering how people might conduct themselves. Consideration of virtue is an obvious nexus through which his syntagma of human being moves toward a consideration of how law impacts upon human existence. Therefore I will now examine Thomas's account of the relation of virtue to passion.

For the concept of virtue to carry the weight of Aquinas' subsequent ethical enquiry, it must be demonstrated that virtue's philosophical superset, a genus called 'habit', is a real entity. Thus the discussion of 'habits' or 'dispositions' in 1a2æ.49-54 is like a barrage of philosophical heavy artillery, preparing for virtue's 'invasion'. After this 'barrage', 1a2æ.55-57 sees the 'beach-head' consolidated in terms of virtue proper. Virtues are a

series of both moral and non-moral ‘operative habits’ in the soul. They are ‘operative’ dispositions because they pertain to act, not to being (1a2æ.55.a2.c).⁴⁹⁷

Thomas’s discussion of virtue proceeds by way of three points that might surprise a modern reader. Firstly, *acts* are logically prior to virtue, and acts are evaluated both by their ends and their nature. ‘Intellectual’ virtue assists this evaluation. But concupiscence threatens to derail the soul’s appropriation of these acts; therefore secondly, ‘moral’ virtue is needed to govern appetite (the locus of passion) so that right ends may be chosen. In fact, moral virtue and passion become *triumphantly consonant*—that is, moral virtue *produces* ‘*ordinate passion*’, and rather than threatening to derail the virtuous life, passion can now actually assist in its formation! Thirdly, Aquinas explains the formation of intellectual and moral virtues toward lives populated by a variety of interesting virtues. The formation begins naturally, but can only continue theologically through ‘love commended’ and ‘love poured in’. These three points form the three sub-sections of this section.

Whereas the previous discussion of passion was somewhat value-neutral, toward the end 1a2æ.57 we finally see Aquinas start to circle back around on passion, armed this time with the ‘weapons’ of virtue.

a) ‘Prudence’: a typical (intellectual) virtue

The important response to 1a2æ.57.a5, on prudence, is worth quoting in full:

Prudence is a virtue most necessary for human life. For a good life consists in good deeds. Now in order to do good deeds, it matters not only what a man does, but also how he does it ... that he do it from right choice and not merely from impulse or passion. And, since choice is about things in reference to the end, rectitude of choice requires two things: namely, the due end, and something suitably ordained to that due end. Now man is suitably directed to his due end by a virtue which perfects the soul in the appetitive part, the object of which is the good and the end. And to that which is suitably ordained to the due end man needs to be rightly disposed by a habit in his reason, because counsel and choice, which are about things ordained to the end, are acts of the reason. Consequently an intellectual virtue is needed in the reason, to perfect the reason, and make it suitably affected towards things ordained to the end; and this virtue is prudence. Consequently prudence is a virtue necessary to lead a good life. (1a2æ.57.a5.c)

Though specifically concerned with prudence (an ‘intellectual’ virtue), the response sets the tone for what follows, touching on a number of key concerns for ethics:

- Virtue finds its moral significance in the logically prior significance of acts; and we have already been told that as a ‘habit’, it is established within a history of action (1a2æ.51.a2-a3). (Clearly, Thomas cannot be blamed for the later losses in ethics, where

⁴⁹⁷ In the spectrum of virtue theories, then, Thomas is among those for whom acts are epistemically prior to agents.

sometimes virtue has been submerged by acts, and sometimes acts have been submerged by virtue.)

- The rightness of acts is, uncontroversially, governed both by their ends and their nature. (Thus Thomas would challenge hegemonic categorisations such as obligation, virtue, and consequence. These are over-reductive accounts of the moral field, and the bellicose disputes between their theorists would seem misguided to Thomas.)
- Passion will not suffice for Aquinas in the right choice of acts (yet presumably, passion has not thereby suddenly become an evil).
- The ‘appetitive part’, which we recall is the locus of the passions, requires governance by virtue so that right ends may be chosen. (Aquinas will pursue this next, defining ‘moral virtue’ specifically and exclusively to have this ‘appetitive’ governance—1a2æ.58.a1.c.⁴⁹⁸)

Having just given Aristotle’s definition of prudence as “right reason of things to be done” (1a2æ.57.a4.c), Aquinas here elaborates: it is an intellectual disposition, enabling the reason to counsel that acts are ordered appropriately to their ends (cf. 1a2æ.58.a4). But it turns out that prudence is not sufficient, and more must be said.

To this end, Aquinas’ disagrees with Socrates; and with unnamed others (1a2æ.58.a2) who misapply Aristotle’s dictum that “the soul rules the body like a despot”. They all conclude that the soul is in complete command. On this view, only ignorance leads to sin (Socrates), which is to be remedied by giving the soul knowledge,

Aquinas opposes such an account using a fusion of Aristotle and Augustine, effectively restating a view of concupiscence albeit without use of that word. Aristotle’s counterstatement that reason commands appetite only by a ‘politic power’ actually works to oppose the Socratic point, for it means that a certain “opposition” obtains. The soul’s requirement for such a ‘politic’ power highlights how “the habits or passions of the appetitive faculty cause the use of reason to be impeded in some particular action.” In this way Aquinas accounts for Augustine’s famous reflection that “sometimes we understand [what is right] while desire is slow, or follows not at all”. Therefore it follows that

for a man to do a good deed, it is requisite not only that his reason be well disposed by means of a habit of intellectual virtue; but also that his appetite be well disposed by means of a habit of moral virtue.

⁴⁹⁸ The syntagma becomes a little confusing when we discover that while all moral virtues pertain to the appetitive part of the soul, not all pertain to the passions (in the sensitive appetite), since there is also the intellectual appetite. *Justice* is the virtue that governs this arena (1a2æ.59.a4.sc & c; cf. 1a2æ.60.a2).

Prudence needs an appetitive ‘ally’.

b) Moral virtue

Moral virtue is this ally, and the antidote to concupiscence:

[T]o one who is swayed by concupiscence, when he is overcome thereby, the object of his desire seems good, although it is opposed to the universal judgment of his reason. ... [H]e needs to be perfected by certain habits, whereby it becomes connatural, as it were, to man to judge aright to the end. This is done by moral virtue ... Consequently the right reason about things to be done, viz. prudence, requires man to have moral virtue. (1a2æ.58.a5.c)

Prudence not only helps us to be of good counsel, but also to judge and command well. This is not possible unless the impediment of the passions, destroying the judgment and command of prudence, be removed; and this is done by moral virtue. (1a2æ.58.a5.ad3)

Thus is the scene somewhat dramatically set for a ‘confrontation’ in 1a2æ.59, “of moral virtue in relation to the passions”, surely inviting one of two breakdowns. A radical backslide into Manichean denigration of passion is very possible. (Any such ‘Manichean’ mood might be polite and subtle—e.g. a Stoic preference for virtue over passion.) Likewise, a simplistic Pelagian argument for triumph-through-virtue might ensue, given that passions are ‘voluntary’ (1a2æ.24.a1.c) and that habits are only ever sustained by a history of actions (1a2æ.51.a2-a3).

The first article sharpens the ‘confrontation’ in its clear delineation of passion from virtue. Yet Aquinas quickly reiterates his anti-Manichean premise, that “passions are not in themselves good or evil” (1a2æ.59.a1.c). And this opens the way for a most surprising second article, where passion and moral virtue are envisioned as *triumphantly consonant, toward a good end* (1a2æ.59.a2.sc). The mood is profoundly Augustinian, with the crucial *De civitate Dei* XIX and XIV evident again as Aquinas’ key inspiration. In the *corpus* Aquinas also seeks to make a key distinction between ‘passion’, and “other affections of the human soul [also called] inordinate emotion[s]”. It transpires that the latter are considered to be ‘inordinate’ because they are disordered, and “not as they should be to manner and time.” Or, to put it bluntly, “Virtue overcomes inordinate passion; it produces ordinate passion. It is inordinate, not ordinate, passion that leads to sin” (1a2æ.59.a5.ad1,2). This and the next article also see Aquinas following Augustine’s deconstruction of certain aspects of the Stoic view.

Throughout 1a2æ.60, Aquinas is gradually revealing the virtues that govern the various passions, by attainment of an Aristotelian mean between extremes. All of the concupiscible passions are governed by temperance; but the irascible passions have more troublesome Aristotelian categories and so are a little trickier. Fear and daring are ordered by fortitude; hope and despair require magnanimity; and anger, meekness. Altogether Aquinas defends

Aristotle's ten virtues that pertain to passion, and justice as an eleventh that governs the intellectual appetite (1a2æ.60.a5.c); but of course, these are further distilled to agree with the four traditional 'cardinal virtues'—temperance, justice, prudence, and fortitude.⁴⁹⁹ But the preceding discussion has been lively, gesturing toward a certain creativity in imagining what kind of virtue might govern a given passion. Aquinas speaks for this flexible mood when he observes how "[m]any, both holy doctors, as also philosophers" speak of multiple virtues as "contained under" the four (1a2æ.61.a3.c).⁵⁰⁰ A later view, that virtues should *suppress* moments of passion, distorts Aquinas' conception of virtues *producing* 'ordinate passions'. Thomas envisaged lives populated by various attractive, interesting and passionate virtues.

c) Theological virtue

The natural resolution of virtue into the classical virtues has proceeded conventionally enough. But to return to our other concern: has all this become merely Pelagian, as if virtue can simply trample down concupiscence on-call? A quotation from Augustine (*De mor. ecc. cath.* §6) becomes significant:

"the soul needs to follow something in order to give birth to virtue: this something is God: if we follow Him we shall live aright." Consequently the exemplar of human virtue must needs pre-exist in God ... (1a2æ.61.a5.c)

If this is akin to Augustine's logic of 'love commended', then the now dubious charge of Pelagianism is demolished by Aquinas' next famous development, a version of the logic of 'love poured in':

Man is perfected by virtue, for those actions whereby he is directed to happiness, as was explained above. Now man's happiness is twofold ... One is proportionate to human nature, a happiness, to wit, which man can obtain by means of his natural principles. The other is a happiness surpassing man's nature, and which man can obtain by the power of God alone, by a kind of participation of the Godhead, about which it is written (2 Pt. 1:4) that by Christ we are made "partakers of the Divine nature." And because such happiness surpasses the capacity of human nature, man's natural principles which enable him to act well according to his capacity, do not suffice to direct man to this same happiness. Hence it is necessary for man to receive from God some additional principles, whereby he may be directed to supernatural happiness, even as he is directed to his connatural end, by means of his natural principles, albeit not without Divine assistance. Such like principles are called 'theological virtues': first, because their object is God, inasmuch as they direct us aright to God: secondly, because they are infused in us by God alone: thirdly, because these virtues are not made known to us, save by Divine revelation, contained in Holy Writ. (1a2æ.62.a1.c)

⁴⁹⁹ 1a2æ.61.a1; respectively, these roughly concur with the concupiscible sensitive appetite, the intellectual appetite, the intellectual apprehension (?), and the irascible sensitive appetite. Cf. 1a2æ.61.a2.c.

⁵⁰⁰ Likewise, he argues against hard distinctions between virtues (1a2æ.61.a4; 1a2æ.65.a1).

Finally, the very complicated 1a2æ.63.a2-a3 engages directly with the problem, and ‘locks’ the development of virtue into a ‘net’ that relies on God’s graceful agency in his divine law and the infusion of virtue. By this stage in the *Summa*, we are dealing with that same ‘global’ turning of the heart to new loves that we saw in Augustine. Servais Pinckaers will be our guide to what, for him, is the summit of the *Summa*.⁵⁰¹

6. Love ‘poured in’ and ‘commended’

What is the logic of the ‘global’ turning of the heart to new loves? This section treats a high point in the *Summa*, to find Thomas’s account of the heart’s turn to reordered love.

I began this chapter by noting that Aquinas draws upon Augustine’s main lines, and fills in Augustine’s main lacunae. This has already been apparent, but in this section we will see the logic of love ‘poured in’, deeply threaded with the logic of love ‘commended’, all wrought in more detail than Augustine envisaged. I show how passion is directed by the work of the Spirit (an example of love ‘poured in’), and new loves ‘commended’ in Christ’s evangelical teaching. Hence a ‘Christian moral organism’ is formed, who responds rightly to God’s good order and for whom virtues are existentially primary.

a) The ‘summit’ of the *Summa*

Pinckaers’ reading of the *Summa* attends to its architectonics, and particularly to Thomas’s understanding of the relationship between the theological virtues and the ‘evangelical law’ (1a2æ.106-108). If the *Summa* seems unchristological, this is only because Aquinas treats of Christ in the *tertia pars*, just as the Trinitarian dimension of the *Summa* was provided by the study of the divine Persons in the *prima pars*.⁵⁰² To ignore this is a form of myopia, according to Pinckaers, who also warns against a kind of ‘double vision’ when 1a2æ is ‘dissected’ so that

there is hardly anything left but human acts, a smattering of passion, and a small sampling of virtue. The place in the sun is turned over to natural law and sin. We also note that the most explicitly Christian treatises have been removed from moral theory proper.⁵⁰³

This kind of use of Thomas by Thomism represents a ‘decapitation’, where the action of the Holy Spirit and the New Law—actually “the entire Gospel capstone of St. Thomas’s moral teaching”—has “been suppressed”⁵⁰⁴ and neglected by the teaching schools.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰¹ In fact, Pinckaers discerns another ‘summit’ later in the *Summa*; but I am content to limit our ascent to one summit.

⁵⁰² Pinckaers, 170.

⁵⁰³ Ibid., 171.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

Significantly, Thomas's key authorities for this section are Jeremiah, Paul and Augustine; and the Philosopher is invoked only for some limited procedural and illustrative points. The evangelical Law (of which the Sermon on the Mount is paradigmatic) is conceived as internally active, and dependent upon the Spirit's action, following Augustine's logic in *De spiritu et littera*. For Pinckaers, this is a novel development in the Scholastic tradition.⁵⁰⁶ That the New Law is a 'grace' correlates it with the treatise that is to follow (on grace—1a2æ.109-114).

b) Works of the Spirit

Although the Holy Spirit was considered in 1a.36-38, the Spirit now reappears immediately after the material on virtue (1a2æ.68-70). Clearly then, Aquinas seeks to detail Augustine's account of how love is 'poured in' by the Spirit. His discussion relates the Spirit to gift, Beatitude and fruit. That is, the lists of Isaiah 11:2-3 (the 'gifts'), Matthew 5:3-12 (the 'beatitudes') and Galatians 5:22-23 (the 'fruits') are all taken to come from God, by the Spirit. To Thomas, it follows straightforwardly that to understand the Spirit's work through these will illuminate the Spirit's other gift, *the theological virtues*.

Thomas wishes to explain how the Holy Spirit co-ordinates these gifts together, to direct the natural virtues, and so to produce perfect works. The section is surprising in its ardent and urgent tone; Thomas seems quite delighted by what these spiritual donations represent.⁵⁰⁷ On the Beatitudes, for example, a pattern of both virtue and gift operates in synergy upon both intellectual and sensitive appetite, working to turn a person *wholeheartedly* to the good.

This turn to the good—"by a virtue, so that [passions] are kept within the bounds appointed by the ruling of reason"—operates in the same way as was sketched for prudence.⁵⁰⁸ But now, Aquinas goes further: passions are directed not only by virtue, but now *also* "by a gift, in a more excellent manner" (1a2æ.69.a3.c). Thus moderation, for example, now joins with

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., 172-3.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., 176-7.

⁵⁰⁷ Pinckaers summarises how for Thomas the theological virtues (which I shall underline in this footnote) are brought about and assisted by the Isaianic gifts of the Spirit (which I shall place in italics). Roughly, the logic is as follows: faith follows from the gifts of *understanding* and *knowledge*; hope from *fear of the Lord*; charity from *wisdom*; prudence from *counsel*; justice from *piety*; courage from *fortitude*; temperance from *fear of the Lord* and *hope*. These gifts do not seem entirely to match the 'fruits' Galatians 5, but because of a quirk related to the history of the Latin Vulgate, they matched well enough for Thomas. (Ibid., 179-80.)

The exercise of correlating the various OT and NT donations of the Spirit is a stretch for modern readers, and serves to show (a) the medieval penchant for tidy categorisation; and more importantly (b) some of the ontologically realist substructures governing medieval ethics. Nevertheless, Thomas's exercise will be worth more than mere archaeology for any modern reader who is willing to experiment in synthesising thematically related biblical material across boundaries of authorship and testament.

⁵⁰⁸ See above, 149.

a *contempt* for riches and honours; and with a *sorrow* at the irascible passions that beckon. Justice joins with “ardent desire” that is signified in the Beatitude’s *hunger and thirst*; and with *peace* to the neighbour. Thus Aquinas sees the Spirit residing amongst the operations of the sensitive appetite, powerfully to ‘fuel’, amplify and vindicate virtue’s intellectual task. Virtues are no longer just natural. They are supernatural, because *the loves of the soul have supernaturally been changed*. This is a logic of love ‘poured in’.

If such ‘fuelling’ seems un-Thomistic (construing Thomism to include later, bowdlerised versions of Aquinas), then that is precisely Pinckaers’ point. Thomas’s account certainly has grace perfecting nature—but the supernatural work is vibrant, personal and intentional. This seems to have gone unnoticed in much commentary upon the *Summa*, possibly because 1a2æ.68-70 is of little interest to moderns (as compared, say, to the treatise on law). But Pinckaers rightly insists that for Thomas, everything has been leading to this.⁵⁰⁹

The total effect is to describe a person in whom there are natural possibilities to move toward the happiness described in 1a2æ.1-5. But for this to be realised, natural possibility can only be fulfilled or completed by the Spirit. The Spirit does this by theological virtues, by gifts, by beatitudes, and by fruits. These operate at all levels upon the human syntagma I have outlined.

c) *Evangelical Law*

In addition (and bypassing for the time being Aquinas’ consideration of sin, 1a2æ.71-89) comes the evangelical law, through which the Spirit works. Pinckaers’ hermeneutic for the *Summa* is radical: “Clearly, not only ethics but the whole study of theology converges in the treatise on the evangelical Law, from the moment of its definition.”⁵¹⁰ This conclusion is not impugned by the brevity of the treatise or the customary conciseness of Aquinas’ expression.

A problematic is outlined in 1a2æ.107.a4.c—a “difficulty [that] attaches to works of virtue”, namely, that “that a virtuous deed be done with promptitude and pleasure.” But virtue is intended to help this difficult problem. To act with promptitude and pleasure “is difficult for a man without virtue: but through virtue it becomes easy for him.” But surely this bodes badly for the precepts of the New Law, which “prohibits certain interior movements of the soul” (such as an adulterous glance or murderous anger). Can the New Law help at all, then?

⁵⁰⁹ Gilby pointed out, per-question, how Thomas likes to build toward his most important points (see above, 133). Pinckaers shows that the same strategy seems to govern the *Summa*’s entire architectonics.

⁵¹⁰ Pinckaers, 178.

Certainly, because in it, “man’s interior movements are ordered” (1a2æ.108.a3.c) by its address to *human volition*. Rather than merely proscribing external behaviours, evangelical law addresses hearers to refrain “from internal acts, and from the occasions of evil deeds”. It also interrogates intention, so that “we should seek neither human praise, nor worldly riches, which is to lay up treasures on earth.” In the actual saying and hearing of it, Christ’s teaching reorders a person toward the ‘pleasures and promptitudes’ of virtue. The same reordering occurs in reference to the neighbour, of whom it is forbidden “to judge him rashly, unjustly, or presumptuously” or “to entrust him too readily with sacred things if he be unworthy”. As in Augustine, ‘love poured in’ merges into ‘love commended’, as hearers of the evangelical law are invited (by command) to participate in the divine reordering of love.

He teaches us how to fulfil the teaching of the Gospel; viz. by imploring the help of God; by striving to enter by the narrow door of perfect virtue; and by being wary lest we be led astray by evil influences. Moreover, He declares that we must observe His commandments, and that it is not enough to make profession of faith, or to work miracles, or merely to hear His words. (1a2æ.108.a3.c)

Thomas has already made it clear that by the Spirit, God is at work to bring the theological virtues; and the hearing of the evangelical law is, apparently, instrumental to the Spirit’s work. This hearing adds no new legal precepts. It reorders the heart, and seems also to be the means by which the gifts, beatitudes and fruits come amongst the elements of the human syntagma. Interestingly, it reorders by revealing truth that is consonant with the moral field (for rather than doing violence to natural virtues, it enhances them). Recalling that people are powerless to reorder themselves (given their bondage to voracity and selective sight), then presumably, ‘evangelical law’ ‘unveils’ whatever in the moral field was always present but lay hidden, veiled by voracity and selective sight.⁵¹¹ The supernatural work here remains mysterious, like wind; yet participation in the entire process is entirely accessible, beginning with the hearing of the evangelical law, and continuing in the doing of it. (This ‘doing’ includes reflection upon and adjustment of “interior movements”.)

⁵¹¹ This conception of the evangelical law’s ‘unveiling’ task concurs with what, for Pinckaers, is the ‘dynamic interconnection’ between all the ‘laws’ in Aquinas. Space forces me to side-step the important treatise on law, 1a2æ.90-105, since it is not directly germane to the investigation. But Pinckaers’ summary of Aquinas’ ‘laws’ is sensitive, and worth recounting here to cast light upon my claim that evangelical law somehow ‘unveils’ the moral field:

[Aquinas] distinguished five kinds of law: the eternal law, divine source of all legislation; natural law, which is the human heart’s direct participation in this; then human law, which derives from natural law. Revelation further added the Old Law, centred in the Decalogue and relating to natural law, and the evangelical Law of the New Testament. These different laws were dynamically interconnected, beginning with the eternal law, descending through natural to civil law, and ascending again toward God to reach their summit in the evangelical Law, the most perfect possible participation in the eternal law that can be found on earth and the closest approximation to our final goal. (Ibid., 181.)

d) A 'Christian moral organism'

Thus for Pinckaers, Aquinas pictures a "Christian moral organism", where under the instruction of the evangelical law, evangelical (or supernatural) virtues proceed from the Holy Spirit. Acting through the reason and the will, *and with the assistance of a spiritually reordered sensitive appetite*, these virtues superintend the natural virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance, which in turn (especially in the case of the last) govern the sensitive appetites. "In this way, a new moral organism is formed, which is specifically Christian."⁵¹²

We might almost imagine Thomas telling a familiar theological story, but in reverse. Rather than beginning with the work of the Spirit in the preached Word, the entire first half of the *Summa* corrals the Aristotelian reader into an Augustinian corner. If the science of Aristotle is as true as it seems in thirteenth-century Paris, then to be a good Aristotelian entails a certain anthropology. A succession of implications follow from this anthropology: first for human action; then for virtue; then for *theological* virtue; and then for the work of the Spirit in the intellectual and sensitive appetites. Finally, the teachings of Christ are seen to fulfil this logic. The syntagma that is left is not, as Pinckaers rightly observes, an Aristotelian one: it is a "Christian moral organism", a kind of being that answers the deepest aspirations of Aristotle more completely than the best conclusions that thinker could ever give.

"Christian morality ... lies principally in virtues and interior acts" and "the action of the Spirit through the virtues creates within us a spontaneous, personal movement toward good acts".⁵¹³ Thus precepts are reduced, freedom increased, and the content of the precepts guarded by love. People can even be said to have developed new 'instincts'.⁵¹⁴ Contrary to this, a charge is sometimes brought against the evangelical Law: that since it adds no precepts to the natural morality of the Decalogue, there is therefore no specifically Christian ethic. The charge assumes that an ethic fundamentally concerns precepts. But Thomas's ethic "consisted mainly in virtues and only secondarily in precepts",⁵¹⁵ and for Pinckaers, there *is* a specifically Christian ethic—but constituted in the bringing to being of divinely reordered 'Christian moral organisms'.

We can add to Pinckaers' conclusion. Distinctive to these 'Christian moral organisms' is their 'logic of love', by which they approach the moral field under divine tutelage, learning

⁵¹² Ibid., 179.

⁵¹³ Ibid., 185.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid., 187.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid., 185.

to love those aspects of it previously veiled to them by their voracious selective sight, and participating in new praxis that will further generate reordered love.

Summa Theologica will follow each discussion of virtue with discussions of the precepts connected to it (in 2a2æ). The interior entity (virtue) is primary, while the exterior elements (precepts) are secondary. This might sound as if to deny the epistemological priority of act over virtue, but there is no such denial here. Rather, the existential side of the logic of love entails that in the *best* instances of right action, passion and virtue are in wholehearted consonance—not necessarily the case where right action proceeds by reference to precept. Virtue takes seriously that deliberative logic is imbued with love, and affirms that participation in ‘love commended’ is pursuant to ‘love poured in’.

7. *How Thomas can, and cannot, help us*

I will end this chapter by summarising some satisfying discoveries in the *Summa*, particularly Thomas’s emphasis upon the immediacy to us of sensory particulars. I want to show that whereas some commentators reproach what they take to be his separation of reason from emotion, actually the reverse is true. Thomas’s distinctive understanding of passion usually leaves him misunderstood, and he has a quite lively understanding of the impact of emotion upon reason, as I will show by way of a personal example.

In relation to the role of reason, I will revisit some observations (made at the beginning of the chapter) about Thomas’s main concern, which is to set out an agenda for personal ethics within the teleological givens of the Christian gospel. Although Thomas certainly presents the human good as grounded in a general theory of goodness that rests upon a particular theory of nature, people within nature cannot respond rightly without reason’s recognition of its teleological ordination—namely, to love God. Without this qualification, it will seem as if Thomas presents reason as autonomously capable of ethics. I will suggest that Thomas guards against this misconception. More importantly, Thomas’s ability to help us ethically is severely curtailed when the *Summa* is read under this misconception. This is the reason John Calvin finds it necessary to respond to the misconception, whether real or imagined in Thomas, as we will see in the next chapter.

a) A satisfying matrix

We have seen a matrix-like quality at work in Aquinas’ grand vision of transformed appetite and renewal of mind.

Jean Porter neatly summarises the elementary natural basis of ‘moral order’ for Thomas. “[H]is theory of the human good is itself grounded in a general theory of goodness, which

rests upon a particular theory of nature.”⁵¹⁶ On this basis certain structures can be discerned within love itself. Love diffracts into a series of emotional responses that reflect the complex array of goods within moral order. Hence a syntagma of human being places passion central to human doing—but not as central as to displace will and intellect. The penultimate *telos* of human action is a set of non-passionate (that is, non-voracious) ‘emotions’ such as happiness, contentment, joy and love, all terminating finally in the knowledge of God.

Thomas’s account effectively interprets some NT paranaesis,⁵¹⁷ and seeks to convert Aristotelians to Augustine’s account of order: that the problem with passion is the disturbance of voracity and the conflict of goods; that emotions are not in themselves bad, but can be put to bad uses (thus making passions ordinate or inordinate); that the impassibility of God does not impugn the bodily nature of our passions; that we are contentedly to enjoy each other; and that the soul has its weight of love which cannot be ignored. Virtue was understood as the producer of ordinate passion; and the Spirit, working through the ‘evangelical law’, was understood as indispensable finally to turn the soul’s love to its proper end.

Within this satisfying matrix, we also notice a particular emphasis upon the immediacy to us of sensory particulars. To examine this I will observe what I take to be a misreading of Thomas, and by way of a personal example I will go on and consider Thomas’s view of the interconnections between passion and moral reasoning.

b) The immediacy of particulars

In translating Thomas, Eric D’Arcy has made the telling complaint that “the word emotion is only the best translation available; it is not perfect. What we call ‘emotions’ are engaged by far more things than sensory-good and sensory-evil; what St Thomas calls *passiones* are not.”⁵¹⁸ My decision to use the older Dominican Fathers’ translation is because of their decision consistently to retain ‘passions’ (also avoiding D’Arcy’s idiosyncrasies, such as ‘orexis’ for appetite). It is easier for modern readers to habituate to Thomas’s nuanced use of ‘passion’, than to imagine the differences between his ‘passion’ and our ‘emotion’. This

⁵¹⁶ Porter, 32.

⁵¹⁷ Here are just four such exhortations: “[D]o not be conformed to the desires [ἐπιθυμίαις] that you formerly had in ignorance [ἀγνοίᾳ]” (1 Pt. 1:14); “[L]ive ... no longer by human desires [ἀνθρώπων ἐπιθυμίαις] but by the will of God [θελήματι Θεοῦ]” (1 Pt. 4:2); “so that ... you may escape from the corruption [φθορᾶς] that is in the world because of lust [ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ], and may become participants of the divine nature [θείας ... φύσεως]” (2 Pt. 1:4); “[B]e transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God [τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ]” (Rom. 12:2).

⁵¹⁸ Eric D’Arcy, in Aquinas, *Summa (Blackfriars 19)*, xxiii.

could not be clearer than in a treatment by the usually impressive Robert C. Roberts, who misreads the *Summa* here.

Roberts wants to insist that emotions are rational, and that rationality is central to them. Thus he must take exception “to locat[ing] the emotions, as [Aquinas] does, in the ‘sensory appetite’”, even though “Aquinas’ rationality-account of the morality of emotions is the right kind of account”.⁵¹⁹ The reading I have offered suggests that Aquinas would probably agree with the burden of Roberts’ concerns; but Roberts’ case is made more difficult by his prior agreement with D’Arcy (despite D’Arcy’s caveats) over translation of *passiones animae* as ‘emotion’. At a number of key points, Roberts’ argument turns upon his claiming as emotion what Aquinas denies to be passion proper (that is, love, joy, happiness etc.).

The same criticism can be levelled at Lyons who, also reliant upon D’Arcy, considers Aquinas deficient because “emotions [are understood] in terms of impulses or desires, and the accompanying physiological changes and feelings, rather than in terms of cognitions and evaluations. ... Aquinas placed emotions first and foremost in the sensory orexis.”⁵²⁰ But he did not—he placed *passion* there, and the distinction that Aquinas makes in this, which Roberts and Lyons do not, is that passion is not simple.

The strength of both objections is that emotions *are* intricately attached to thoughts; but because of the confusion over ‘emotion’, they have missed that Aquinas agrees.⁵²¹ Moreover, the strength of Aquinas’ syntagma remains that emotions begin their focus in *external particulars*. No counsellor would disagree, and nor would Lyons or Roberts, since both recognise the counsellor’s major tool, that emotions are highly responsive to context. That is much of Aquinas’ point.

I will now give a personal example that illustrates just how highly responsive emotions are to context. The example will also neatly illustrate their profound interconnections with moral reasoning.

c) An example of emotion at work

I was struck by a moment in my own experience that highlighted the immediacy of particulars for the emotions, the role of emotion in moral life, and the interconnections

⁵¹⁹ Robert C. Roberts, “Thomas Aquinas on the Morality of the Emotions,” *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 9 no. 3 (1992): 288.

⁵²⁰ Lyons, 36.

⁵²¹ This disagreement is complicated to the extent that the modern discussion remains undecided about the degree to which an emotion is a bodily ‘disturbance’.

between emotion and moral reasoning. It also illustrates the terrible complexities involved in accounting for even a small real-world event.

Over-simplified examples usually given by philosophers will not do here. Usually given for simplicity to establish some single point, they are almost always too thin to be more than a notional engagement with the world and its people. In contrast, to properly recount this incident risks awkwardness; yet it requires to be told at length. The discomfort, if so caused, is intentional. Indeed the present tense will be used to help heighten the discomfort (since emotions respond to context).

During the course of this doctoral study, my wife Mary-Anne and I had two (old) motor cars. A minor mishap for her left us with one, necessitating that as breadwinner she would now drive the other. Of itself this was of no major concern to me, after having satisfactorily resolved disposal of the first car, and deciding that in any case, a bicycle would be good for my fitness.

A few days later and after a pleasant evening spent together, the conversation turns to our new situation, and Mary-Anne observes a good benefit arising from the accident. She says how good it is that in this way I should receive more exercise. The thought is exactly parallel to my own.

But imagine her surprise when suddenly I hurl myself from my chair, aggressively reject this opinion as an insult, abusively shouting something to the effect of ‘how dare she be so rude’, and stalk from the room. The transaction takes less than five seconds.

The violence of my reaction seems explicable for a number of reasons (even if, as is almost certainly the case, there remain deeper reasons of which I am unaware). In a moment, several ‘collisions’ have occurred: resentment at the necessary rearrangement of my schedule; vanity at the thought I should need exercise; sadness that I should so obviously need it; hostility at the easiness of the comment, given the complexity for me in transacting with the insurer; and (petulant) ‘grief’ at a moderate limitation upon my driving (which I usually enjoy).

In this moment and during this cascade, these clusters of thought and emotion have the status of supreme and powerful self-evidence. They are gathered around a highly complex account of reality. They concern a number of seemingly lost goods.

If she was bewildered by the wildness of this mood change, I was equally disconcerted by its rapidity—the sheer speed at which such thoughts formed and surged forth into decidedly

unethical action. The frailty of my hindsight was equally unnerving, for the difficulty in reconstructing what had actually happened was compounded by moods both of self-justification and shameful regret.

Such moments illustrate the importance of the current investigation, representing as they do highly person-specific collisions of subjective reasons and the presence or absence of various goods, all within a shared reality. Action issues from collisions like these, sometimes explosively, and this action attracts moral predicates. (In my case, the predicates are vices: ‘vain’, ‘irritable’, ‘pompous’ etc.)

Many relationships are almost entirely constituted by an indistinguishable succession of such moments, and it is the living of relationship counsellors to go about this frail task of reconstruction after events—not to mention discoveries of deeper stories, such as that clearly it was *not* ‘of no major concern to me’ as I disposed of the damaged vehicle. I will further consider these kinds of difficulties in the next chapter.

For now, the role of emotion in moral life, and the immediacy of particulars for the emotions, are clear enough in the example without further exposition. But the interconnections between emotion and moral reasoning require further exposition, and I will now assay (rather than survey) Thomas’s account of this interconnection.

d) Thomas on emotion and moral reasoning

We recall that in Thomas’s syntagma, the will is at the intersection of intellect and sensual appetite.

The will “has a natural inclination always to follow the judgment of the reason” (1a2æ.77.a1.c) since it is the appetitive aspect of the *intellect*. The intellect presents good objects to the will, thereby moving it (1a2æ.9.a1); which is to say the will chooses the good as proposed by reason, and as ordered by the eternal law (1a2æ.19). “[T]he goodness of the will depends on its being subject to reason” (1a2æ.19.a3).

Sensuality is “the appetite of things belonging to the body” (1a.81.a1.sc), and “the passion of the sensitive appetite is not the direct object of the will, yet it occasions a certain change in the judgment about the object of the will” (1a2æ.77.a1.ad1). That is, passion can direct the will, even though the will’s proper ‘informant’ is the intellect.

How is it possible for reason to be directed other than by its proper informant? Some lines in Thomas’s account can be summarised (inadequately) as follows:

- A will to evil is mediated by the sensitive appetite seizing upon some particular good, to the exclusion of reason's other proposals about the good. (As in Augustine, evil is merely a privation of good. Simple evil is good in a certain respect but deficiently, 1a2æ.18.a1.ad1.) This is how sensuality can be seen, like the serpent, as inciting sin (1a.81.a1.ad3).
- Firstly, the misleading of the will *begins* with a *fomes*, “the inextinguishable spark of unreason in human nature.”⁵²² This term encompasses the ‘first movements’ of concupiscence or sensuality. It is a natural bent of the sensory appetite (1a2æ.74.a3.ad2; 1a2æ.81.a3.ad2; 1a2æ.89.a5.ad1; 1a2æ.91.a6), and is used to describe ineradicable, culpable and personal participation in original sin. “Take the *fomes* as the beast within, the unpredictable source of impulses, loutish, lascivious, and perverse, a theologized *id.*”⁵²³
- Secondly, the misleading of the will then *proceeds* “by a kind of distraction” (1a2æ.77.a1.c). The *indivisibility* of the soul, and a conception of limited *energy* available to it, means that “when one power is intent in its act, another power becomes remiss, or is even altogether impeded”. So when the sensitive appetite is preoccupied by passion toward some particular, “the proper movement of the rational appetite or will must, of necessity, become remiss or altogether impeded.”
- Thirdly, the misleading of the will also proceeds when sensuality speaks to the intellect by a kind of ‘backdoor’ route. This backdoor is, roughly, the imagination. “[T]hose who are in some kind of passion” (especially “those who are out of their mind”) “do not easily turn their imagination away from the object of their emotion” (1a2æ.77.a1.c).
- Elsewhere Thomas will picture reason “wholly bound”, as in fury or insanity (1a2æ.10.a3.c), or simply marginalised due to the speed of passion (hence “unbridled”) or due to a lack of conviction (hence “weak”, 2a2æ.156.a1.c). (Cf. also 1a2æ.33.a3.c.)

Space forbids a more extensive summary of this interesting and highly nuanced material, but we might fruitfully note a summary by Aquinas from elsewhere:

[W]hat is evil is concupiscently desired ... in accordance with the sensory appetite, pertaining to the flesh, stem[ming] not from the activity of the reason but from the bent of the *fomes*. But the man is said to do what his reason does, because a man is what he is in accord with his reason. And so [in the case of] movements of concupiscence, which stem not from reason but

⁵²² Kretzmann, “Warring,” 185.

⁵²³ Ibid., 186.

from the *fomes* (which is here named ‘sin’), it is not the man but the *fomes* of sin that is operative.⁵²⁴

Given this kind of summary, reason could easily be conceived *as a noble citadel*, albeit somewhat battered through external assault by the hostile forces of the sensitive appetite. The citadel can be beguiled—fed misinformation and misled by ‘false intelligence reports’, as it were, to make the wrong estimate of things. But although besieged, it is never finally overthrown, for all these misfortunes are accidental to its essence. Essentially, it exists to know the good and true.

It is not hard to see how such a reading would make Thomas the exemplary optimist concerning the power of reason as autonomously capable of ethics. On this view, reason freely accesses the natural order, is unmolested by the distractions of any ‘emotive’ stimuli, and will serviceably pass estimates of good on to the will, thereby generally producing right action.

But this reading misses the wider context within which the elements of the above summary are situated, just as it misses an important alternate account of malfunctioning reason.

What is the wider context? In part, that Aquinas is trying to make sense of how people can decide against various impulses in the face of temptation—which presupposes a class of people who construe such impulses as ‘temptation’. What then is the alternate account of malfunctioning reason? It is a mode of reasoning that pretends some lesser good than God to be humanity’s last end, and construes impulses toward this counterfeit last end *to be ordinate, rather than ‘tempting’ as such*. Thomas calls this mode of reasoning *certain malitia*—that is, ‘resolute’ or ‘certain’ *malice*. It is a mode of reasoning that misleads the will and the passions, rather than being misled by the passions.

A person “is said to sin through certain malice or on purpose, because he chooses evil knowingly”, which is to say that he chooses the privation of good merely by estimating some temporal good to be more worthy than divine goods (1a2æ.78.a1.c). Again, this is something like what in Augustine I called ‘selective sight’. Malice, then, represents a fundamental refusal to recognise humanity’s true end: “he who sins through certain malice is ill-disposed in respect of the end itself” (1a2æ.78.a4.c). Such reasoning straightforwardly passes a warped assessment of good to the will, thereby producing an “inordinate will” (1a2æ.78.a1.c). Therefore malice can equally be described as “a certain proneness of the will to evil” (1a2æ.85.a3.ad2), which Thomas thinks he sees in Genesis 8:21 (where “the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth”).

⁵²⁴ Ibid., 188, citing Aquinas, *Super epistolam ad Romanos lectura*.

This is an account of evil as pertaining to a class of people for whom unaided reason cannot, in the nature of the case, deduce humanity's true end. The principle of spiritual life "is the order to the last end ... and if this order be corrupted, it cannot be repaired by any intrinsic principle, but by the power of God alone" (1a2æ.88.a1.c). Only a divine intervention can help. Thomas therefore has a sympathetic reading of Augustinian predestination, since "it belongs to providence to direct things towards their end" (1a.23.a1.c); and as we have already seen, divine intervention takes place in the Holy Spirit's work through the evangelical law, to 'pour in' and commend love.

Therefore the summary above (though initially seeming to endorse the autonomy of reason for ethics) *only* pertains to *a specific class* of people. Jordan has noticed this in his careful reading of Aquinas' logic of reason and passion. Thomas actually avoids a straightforward statement about the subordination of passion to reason, and prefers instead a certain set of metaphors and a specially structured argument. The net effect is to disclose that all souls have a specific teleological ordination, and that "emotions are subject to moral control precisely because they appear within the configuration of the soul's teleology."⁵²⁵ Hence there is no need for the *Summa* to persuade readers to choose the soul's true end. Rather Thomas simply clarifies it, then gives readers a clear knowledge of the ways that lead to a good already chosen. "There is no need for the Greek conversion of passions, because there has already been a conversion to Christ. This assumption transforms the order of moral teaching, especially in the crucial case of the passions."⁵²⁶ This is the point that began this chapter, as stated also by Pinckaers and MacIntyre.⁵²⁷

Given this, we can make better sense of the distinction Kretzmann has found in Thomas, between two classes of people. "When the ἐνὶ of [Rom. 7:15] is understood simply as a person's reason, its carnality is (in the case of a person under sin) subjection of the reason to the flesh; or (in the case of someone under grace) the attack of the flesh upon the reason. These two correlate, respectively, with actual sin and original sin."⁵²⁸

Does Thomas's account of the interconnections between emotion and moral reasoning throw any light upon my sudden abuse toward my wife? Certainly. Thomas would call the rapidity of such action passion 'unbridled' by reason. He might ask if my frail hindsight, with its moods of self-justification and regret, reflected a lack of conviction as to my true

⁵²⁵ Jordan, 96.

⁵²⁶ Ibid., 97.

⁵²⁷ See above, pp. 121 & 124.

⁵²⁸ Kretzmann, "Warring," 185.

end. He would notice irascible and concupiscible components in my anger, warding off sadness and grabbing for lost goods in my immediate vicinity, but perhaps also contaminated by false imaginings. The powerful self-evidence of my highly complex account of reality in that moment instantiated the kind of preoccupation that renders reason temporarily incapable of assessing the real order of things; perhaps for a moment, my reason was even 'bound'. What about my vices ('vain', 'irritable', 'pompous' etc.)? Although we have not examined Thomas's account of these, perhaps he would pause to determine whether they were a sudden and uncharacteristic burst in a generally ordered and virtuous Christian life, or if they reflected a malicious reasoning that is thoroughly committed to false ends.

In sum, Thomas interrogates me over the degree to which I fall short of proper responses toward the divinely ordered natural situation within which I find myself. Is his interrogation of me the right kind of interrogation? It is Augustine who assists us to determine whether or not Aquinas' interrogation of me is of the right kind of interrogation.

e) A theological caveat

Augustine showed the privations of disorder within a good cosmos, where moral reasoning is complicated by our passionate responses to a complex world. But the prospect of reordered love beckons us to an optimistic overcoming of such complications. If theology's understanding of the good can join with the best available science, then perhaps we can discern the order that was lost and reorder love. Something like this was Aquinas' project.

Indeed, to hope for less is to fear the worst: that our passions might be evil, that their 'irrationality' makes them monstrous, that life in a body is fractured at best, and that the Manichees were right. But thankfully, Aquinas' grand vision triumphantly vindicates Augustine against the Manichees. For Aquinas, there are many reasons joyfully to expect the gospel's promise of reordered love.

Nonetheless, Aquinas cannot entirely satisfy us, for two interlocking reasons. The first is understandable, and quite forgivable given the context of the *Summa*. It is clear from Aquinas' christological writings prior to the *Summa* that he was in heavy dialogue with a variety of positions in philosophical christology. Within this perhaps fairly dangerous debate, it is important for him to shape the material on human anthropology (in the first three-quarters of the *Summa*) so as to lay the foundation for describing the respects in which Christ is rightly said to be fully human (in the *tertia pars*).⁵²⁹

⁵²⁹ Martin Stone, "To What Extent, If Any, Did The 1277 Condemnations Affect the Direction of Late Medieval Christology?," (King's College London, seminar in research theology: 13th March 2001). Stone adds that medieval

Of course, all good theological anthropology should be fundamentally christological. But Aquinas' theological anthropology could be construed either as unchristological, or inappropriately christological (*pace* Pinckaers). The structure of Thomas's argument seems to allow the force of no christology to be brought against regular, disordered human behaviour (such as my own), making the anthropology seem unchristological. Conversely, it can seem inappropriately christological insofar as it is tailored to account for the person of Christ, but without the work of Christ reciprocally being allowed to inform us about the nature of fallen humanity. Thus the incarnation of Christ might take precedence over the work of Christ in theology's epistemic task, and Augustine's christological 'hard-point'—the absurdity of "Christ's death in vain" (Gal. 2:21)⁵³⁰—risks being missed.

The second difficulty follows from this—that Aquinas' account is certainly not Pelagian, but might invite Pelagian uses. (One such Pelagian use might be the provisional summary I offered, where unaided human reason was competent for moral reasoning.) For it is also Augustine who reminds us that if morality were simply a matter of rightly responding to order, then Christ died for nothing. This is the rock upon which Julian repeatedly founders. Augustine uses the cross as a spectre, to show how Christian theology declares a new anthropological view as requisite, a view arising from a different place.

These two slurs on Aquinas are possibly too harsh; indeed, I have phrased them tentatively ("might", "can", "risks") because of thick defences that could be mustered from the *Summa* against them. But the slurs seem justified if only because subsequent theology *did* make some of those mistakes, and perhaps the slurs relate to a tendency to leach Augustine out of Aquinas. Perhaps also the slurs are substantiated just a little by Thomas himself, "strikingly expressed in Aquinas' verdict upon his own work in the days immediately before his death"⁵³¹—that against the reality of God, his conceptions of humanity and its goods seemed very small.

Given these concerns, a respectful and robust response, whether to Aquinas or to his misreadings, needs to follow. It is a response that reminds theology of Augustine's anti-Pelagian stance on the depths of human bondage to disordered love. In this response I am reminded (*apropos* my personal example) that whatever I made of the divinely ordered natural situation within which I found myself, and however powerfully self-evident was my account of reality in that moment, and however effectual or ineffectual my reconstruction

thought until the fifteenth century often sought to match theological anthropology with christology.

⁵³⁰ See above, 93f.

⁵³¹ Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth, 1988), 193.

amidst vacillating self-justification and shame, *I am finally claimed by God*. He claims me in his love; he claims my love; and I am therefore claimed by his command. On this basis, the response will reiterate (with Aquinas and Augustine) the greatness of divinely reordered love.

The response finds a voice three hundred years later, in John Calvin.



Chapter VI: The Loving Embrace of Their Beauty (Calvin's ethic)

Half way along the road we have to go,
I found myself obscured in a great forest
Bewildered, and I knew I had lost the way.

It is hard to say just what the forest was like.
How wild and rough it was, how overpowering;
Even to remember it makes me afraid.

...

But when I had arrived at the foot of a hill,
Which formed the far end of that menacing valley
Where fear had already entered into my heart,

I looked up, and saw the edges of its outline
Already glowing with the rays of the planet
Which shows us the right way on any road.⁵³²

We have seen Augustine integrate ethics and emotion by way of a 'logic of love', and Aquinas' completion, in the finest possible detail, of what Augustine began. While marvelling at the brilliance of Aquinas' achievement, I suggested that it may lend itself to readings that do not deal seriously enough with Augustine's anti-Pelagian concerns. In this chapter I will describe a counter-statement by Calvin as follows.

The human condition is so painful and confused that any prospect of successful moral reasoning seems bleak (Section One). In the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin indicts humanity's faithless unconcern towards God, which Thomas called *malitia*, as completely distorting human access to the moral field (Section Two). But a divine love toward humanity claims people even when their discernment of the moral field is least clear. The fundamentally christological restoration that follows brings a new governance for the affections and opens the way to a heartfelt enjoyment of people and a new, humble access to virtue (Section Three). I will now pause to outline these sections in slightly more detail.

I will reflect in Section One upon Calvin's melancholy about the human condition, as found in his *Institutes*. Looking to the various conundrums and the painful experience of the previous chapter, I find evidence that such melancholy is warranted. The view that reason unmolested by emotion is sufficient for ethics therefore seems trite, and it is against such a view that Calvin makes his urgent assaults.

⁵³² Dante, *The Divine Comedy* (1308-20), tr. Charles H. Sisson, with a foreword by David H. Higgins, *Oxford World's Classics* edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 47 (*Inferno* I.1-6, 13-18).

Section Two begins my treatment of Calvin's *Institutes*. In this section I will argue that Calvin's urgency comes from a sustained examination of what Aquinas called *malitia*, which Calvin presents as a faithless unconcern towards God that warps humanity's apprehension of the moral field. The complicity of reason in this faithless unconcern is Aquinas' *malitia* writ large—so large, in fact, that I will pause to examine whether Calvin has drifted into Manicheism in his emphatic treatment of it.

In Section Three, I will show how love is 'commended' and 'poured in' according to Calvin. Instead of faithless unconcern toward God, the affections begin to serve in a 'righteous' role. Divine love toward humanity makes a claim upon people, even when they do not discern the moral field in a way that elicits their love. New governance for the affections occurs in the recognition of this divine love claim. The pneumatological restoration that follows is fundamentally christological in various respects, entailing a certain kind of knowledge of Christ that alters the affections. (The divine claim of love, and the christological orientation of divine restoration, are conceptions in which Calvin differs from Aquinas.) The heartfelt enjoyment of people that follows becomes Calvin's basis for ethics—a 'loving embrace' of various neighbours' 'beauty'. The account opens the way for virtue to be understood humbly. In the first-person, each virtue becomes a statement of aim (but *not* self-description). Each can also be a statement of description and affirmation towards second- and third-persons.

1. Failure in the forest

I will reflect in this section upon Calvin's melancholy about the human condition. Looking to the various conundrums and the painful experience of the previous chapter, I find evidence that such melancholy is warranted. The view that reason unmolested by emotion is sufficient for ethics therefore seems trite, and it is against such a view that Calvin makes his urgent assaults.

There is a degree of impertinence in using Dante of all people (quoted above, page 169), to illuminate Calvin, of all people. But Dante's first steps on his epic netherworld journey aptly allegorise a contrast between Calvin's anthropology and medieval anthropology. The "great forest", the "menacing valley", represents sin and ignorance, where there stalk the wild animals of vice. The sunlit hill is a virtuous life, lit by divine wisdom.⁵³³

Aquinas writes of this life from the flanks of that hill, looking down, as it were, upon the forest. He knows this forest to be real, and would have travellers escape its confines. But

⁵³³ Ibid., 501; cf. 15 (Higgins' introduction and note).

these confines are largely confined to *Summa Theologica* 1a2æ.71-89—a thicket, as it were, viewed from a hillside, watching the sunny topside of its canopy. In Karl Barth's appreciation of medieval theology,

we are surprised again and again by the great harmony, the mixture of boldness and sagacity, of profundity and common sense, that we find there. It is the harmony of the monastery garden with its rows of cherry trees ... [or] of the Gothic cathedral ... We are astonished at the certainty about life that the authors display and spread abroad in spite of opposing symptoms. ... What a waltz it dances in its investigations out from the centre to every side! Everything is important, everything has to be elucidated and discussed ... We come away with the happy impression that we have really heard everything that we might want.⁵³⁴

But “what a dark and threatening forest [we have] in Calvin's *Institutes*!”⁵³⁵ Calvin travels with every human traveller in that “great forest”. He takes it to be no mere thicket for whomever wanders, stalked, within it. Any search of the *Institutes* for ‘treatises’ on sin is quickly overwhelmed. The ubiquity of voracity and selective sight reverberates with Augustinian melancholy on practically every page where there appears humanity. For this is a people “blinded and drunk with self-love” (*Inst.* II.vii.6).⁵³⁶

“[N]ot only did a lower appetite seduce [Adam], but unspeakable impiety occupied the very citadel of his mind, and pride penetrated to the depths of his heart” (II.i.9). The disagreement with a certain form of medieval Thomism is blunt. “[I]t is pointless and foolish to restrict the corruption that arises thence only to what are called the impulses of the senses”. Calvin adduces here the Pauline indictment of both appetite and mind (Rom. 1:1-20, 8:6-7), so that exhortations to transformation of mind (Eph. 4:23, Rom. 12:2) prove the same point by negation. The case is put repeatedly and extremely: “[T]he whole man is overwhelmed—as by a deluge—from head to foot, so that no part is immune from sin and all that proceeds from him is to be imputed to sin” (II.i.9).

There are enough disavowals of Manicheism here to off-balance a Nietzschean attack. Calvin ‘affirms life’, and attacks certain kinds of religion aggressively enough to defend against any charge of Manicheism. The Nietzschean charge of ‘bad conscience’ is predictable enough, since Calvin's radically emotional theology certainly tells of fear (of

⁵³⁴ Karl Barth, *The Theology of John Calvin* (1922), tr. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1995), 36-37.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁵³⁶ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion Vols. 1-2* (1559), tr. Ford Lewis Battles, *Library of Christian Classics* edition, vols XX-XXI, (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960). This translation will be used throughout. For readability, references will be included in the main text. Pagination will only be given in reference to Battle's introduction and apparatus.

the wrath of God), despair (given ludicrous human pride and self-deception)—and concomitantly, relief (in the Spirit and by Christ’s salvation).

But I will withhold judgment over whether Calvin exhibits ‘bad conscience’, for if there is a problem with Calvin, it is far more pressing than Nietzschean concerns. Calvin will never allow us to forget the fear, despair and deceptions of the “menacing valley”, giving rise to the possibility that there is no hope of any moral change for anyone traversing the ‘valley’, nor any possibility of finding release from the kinds of outburst that I described of myself in the previous chapter. Is such melancholy warranted? Does the melancholy entail a hopelessness about moral change?

The melancholy would certainly seem to be warranted, given difficulties that were apparent in the previous chapter. I did not strive to make these difficulties apparent at the time but they were certainly present. We learnt that passion resides in the sensory appetite although some emotion takes place in the intellect, since not all emotion is passion (in the strong sense), and on this basis I tried to tease out a dispute, possibly arcane, between Thomas and others about intellectual components in emotion. We saw that passion can mislead the intellect by distracting it, by binding it, and by deluding it through imagination. We further learnt that reason can take the form of *malitia*, which actively promotes a false end and pretends inordinate passions to be ordinate. Although we did not press Thomas on this, a difficulty clearly looms in arbitrating between ‘resolute malice’ and reason merely misled.

Into these difficult deliberations, I inserted a personal example of my own. My problem was an ancient one. As an acting subject, I struggled to unravel the mystery of my own subjectivity—an epistemic problem of the knottiest kind, since the rationality-warping fixations of emotion and the emotion-evading machinations of rationality intervene at every turn. This created an existential problem for me that was magnified by the responsiveness of my emotions, including their incredible speed.

This should remind us of fundamental disputes about emotion in modern neurobiology.⁵³⁷ Despite the clear existence of different centres for reason and emotion in the brain, the extraordinarily high levels of interconnection between these make the discovery somewhat moot, and the brain scientist is confronted with the same ancient problems in a new form. The ability of modern neurobiology to measure the incredible speed in which ‘ethico-emotional’ moments occur only serves to highlight that speed rather than to comprehend its meaning. Aquinas and Aristotle before him knew of this speed; brain science now offers the

⁵³⁷ I have in mind here LeDoux’ and Panksepp’s disagreement as to whether emotions subsist in whole-brain networks or are ‘natural kinds’ subsistent in specific, separate neurological components. See above, 21.

neurological basis for it; and I remain as perplexed by my own behaviour as were my ancient forebears.

My problem, when placed alongside Thomas, Solomon, Roberts, Lyons and Panksepp, highlights how blurry is our discourse and how unclear are our terms as we reach through a kind of veil, not to some already difficult conundrum of external knowledge, but reflexively, to an account of the very haziness through which we reach. This is not to be sceptical of the worth of such deliberation, and especially not of the incisive subtlety of a Thomas Aquinas, whose various insights come upon us with definite force each time something new about ourselves is revealed. But it is to signal an existential sorrow, for so instantaneous and complicated was my experience that no *ex post facto* analysis seems sufficient to prevent the next such outburst. And clearly, if one such moment in a usually very good marriage can be so complicated, it does not augur well for our attempts to speak of and to work towards a wider account of these matters (and to help relationships in great pain).

These profound difficulties are what make any simplistic summary of Aquinas—that reason and will, unmolested by emotion, are sufficient for good action—seem trite. It very much seems that Calvin is opposed to precisely such a summary as this. In attacking such a view, Calvin is urgently exhortatory.

As to whether Calvin's melancholy entails a hopelessness about moral change, we find rather that his urgency makes us sharply aware of the claim upon us made by God's love toward us. But this is to move too quickly ahead.

2. Unconcern towards God: an evil lack

In this section I will argue that Calvin's urgency comes from a sustained examination of what Aquinas called *malitia*, which Calvin presents as a faithless unconcern towards God that warps humanity's apprehension of the moral field. The complicity of reason in this faithless unconcern is Aquinas' *malitia* writ large—so large, in fact, that I will pause to examine whether Calvin has drifted into Manicheism in his emphatic treatment of it.

a) An Institutes dialectic: knowledge of God, knowledge of self

Calvin's famous starting point is anthropology with a 'twist'. The ancient Delphic dictum to 'know thyself' is, says Calvin, an uncommon example of human agreement with "God's truth" (II.i.3).⁵³⁸ True wisdom commences in a dialectical relationship between knowledge of God and of self, a theme around which much of the subsequent work is based. But it is a

⁵³⁸ Cf. Calvin, 241 n.1 (Battles' note).

blurred dialectic: “while joined by many bonds, which one precedes and brings forth the other is not easy to discern” (I.i.1). We find that God is known partly by reference to a profound human *lack*; in turn, this lack is discovered after a certain kind of encounter with God. This most counter-intuitive entrée to the dialectic is pressed. God could be partly known by reference to the self (“a workshop graced with God’s unnumbered works ... a storehouse overflowing with inestimable riches”, I.v.4)—but the self is *uninterested* so to do. Human existence is deeply riven by this ambiguity, and this *absence of concern*, this *lack* of affect, will prove decisive.

However in humanity’s first awareness the dialectic had no such ambiguity. “[P]ride was bridled”, because humanity knew its origin to be in frail matter, counterpointed by the Maker’s “great liberality” in giving life to dust and making it home to “an immortal spirit” (I.xv.1). “[A]lthough the primary seat of the divine image was in the mind and heart, or in the soul and its powers, yet there was no part of man, not even the body itself, in which some sparks did not glow” (I.xv.3). This is the sense in which humans were the *imago dei*—a term that expresses

the integrity with which Adam was endowed ... when he had full possession of right understanding, when he had his affections kept within the bounds of reason, all his sense tempered in right order, and he truly referred his excellence to exceptional gifts bestowed upon him by his Maker. (I.xv.3)

‘Reason’ is the knowledge of God. “[T]he more anyone endeavours to approach God, the more he proves himself endowed with reason” (I.xv.6). ‘Affections’ kept within the bounds of this reason were “all his sense tempered in right order.” Here is an Augustinian respect for the primordial goodness of creation, and a clear agreement with Thomas.

b) Body and soul in Calvin

Calvin does seek to distance himself from the classical views of body and soul, yet he nevertheless regards the soul classically. It is incorporeal substance, set in a body, and responsible for both the animation of the body and the rule of a person’s life (I.xv.6). This is a point of orthodoxy for Calvin. The soul is “an immortal yet created essence” and humanity’s “nobler part”. The scriptural language of ‘soul’ and ‘spirit’ is unreflectively equated with traditional Greek conceptions, and even to gesture toward alternative readings is dismissed as “stupidly blundering ... opinion” (I.xv.2).

On this view, conscience offers epistemic access to the soul’s existence. When conscience discerns between good and evil, it is responding to God’s judgment and is “an undoubted sign of the immortal spirit”. Calvin’s justification for this ‘undoubtedness’ (I.xv.2) is thick with Aristotelian categories; and as in Aquinas, the various operations of the mind are attributed to an inherent soul and adduced as evidence for it.

Yet while this fairly strong statement of dualism might seem significant for all that follows, subsequent dependence upon it is surprisingly light. Despite this formal dependence, we shall actually see a total departure from the Aristotelian tradition.

c) Evil as ignorance and disordered affection

God's image was not totally annihilated and destroyed in [man], yet it was so corrupted that whatever remains is frightful deformity ... Now God's image is the perfect excellence of human nature which shone in Adam before his defection, but was subsequently so vitiated and almost blotted out that nothing remains after the ruin except what is confused, mutilated, and disease-ridden. (I.xv.4)

This chaotic corruption results from "sense" *not* "tempered in right order". A comprehensive defect—a failure of reason's ordering—is on view, although whatever has happened is not yet clear. But just as Thomas knew of sense not tempered in right order, so also we might suspect that the comprehensive failure on view is what Thomas described as 'malice'.

While mounting a proof against the view that in the giving of souls God implants his own divine essence,⁵³⁹ Calvin takes another opportunity to describe human frailty, conceived in terms of an 'ethico-emotional' lack:

For if man's soul be from the essence of God through derivation, it will follow that God's nature is subject not only to change and passions, but also to ignorance, wicked desires, infirmity, and all manner of vices. Nothing is more inconstant than man. Contrary motions stir up and variously distract his soul. Repeatedly he is led astray by ignorance. He yields, overcome by the slightest temptation. We know his mind to be a sink and a lurking place for every sort of filth. (I.xv.5)

On its own, the 'sink' metaphor would be Manichean. But the evil of this mind is actually constituted by the turbulent confluence of ignorance and disordered affection, and as a graphic depiction of the human source of evil, Calvin has not strayed from Augustine even while amplifying him.

This corruption-by-chaos makes pointless its description by any detailed taxonomy. Plato's 'rational' and 'sensitive' souls were inferred from the contradictions between the operation of the soul upon the body, and its rational impulses. But Calvin finds Plato's construct to reduce the actual complexities that people face (such as my own response to my wife in the previous chapter):

As if reason itself did not also disagree with itself and were not at cross-purposes with itself, just like armies at war. But since this disturbance arises out of the depravity of nature, it is wrong to conclude from this that there are

⁵³⁹ Although Battles calls this view 'traducianism' (based on Calvin's use of *tradux* for 'derivation'; *ibid.*, 191 n.15), Calvin actually opposes some form of emanationism, and holds to a 'creationist' view (where God creates each soul *de novo*, not from his own essence).

two souls, just because the faculties do not agree among themselves in befitting proportion. (I.xv.6)

Again, if our first impulse is to predicate this “depravity of nature” as Manichean, we very much miss the point, for Plato’s error was to miss the *holism* of *perfect* human nature—now chaotically divided, which is to say, “depraved”—and so to deduce the division as *constitutive* of humanity. Rather, argues Calvin, never could there be a *less* fertile ground for a complete ‘natural anthropology’ than the human person, since humanity is actually very far from what it could be. Thus many aspects of human experience coincident with our understanding of ‘emotion’ are morally indicted (with only ‘conscience’ somewhat exempt, on Calvin’s view of its evidencing the soul).

We are beginning to see a conception here of *a comprehensive failure, arising from disordered affection, and affective unconcern towards God*. This is Aquinas’ ‘malice’ but announced through a megaphone, as it were. If the complexity of the *Summa*, its presumption of Christian conversion, and its ostensive method has muted the problem of *malitia* in medieval thought, then Calvin steps forward to redress this imbalance in no uncertain terms. The exposition of what Aquinas called *malitia*—that is, the polemical condemnation of unconcern towards God—presages an extended debate in the *Institutes*. The philosophical tradition, anthropologically optimistic and self-referential, is brought into an explicit confrontation with the dialectical knowledge of self against God.

Humanity should know itself through reflection upon its createdness, where human excellences—given for a future of divine worship—generate “the nature of [our] duty” (II.i.3). Humanity should also regard deeply its total chaotic ‘ruin’. “[W]hoever is utterly cast down and overwhelmed by the awareness of his calamity, poverty, nakedness, and disgrace has thus advanced farthest in knowledge of himself” (II.ii.10). Care is required, since there is “nothing that man’s nature seeks more eagerly than to be flattered” (II.i.2). Better to be “prostrate in extreme confusion ... reduced to nought” (II.i.3).

Though mild toward Aristotelian faculty psychology, Calvin does not finally consider it very important, since he believes his simplification of the faculties to be an altogether more useful tool. The soul is just its understanding and its will, where the will desires what the understanding approves.⁵⁴⁰ More crucially, it is not that a reasonable faculty seeks the good whilst sense seeks pleasure: the ‘real picture’ is more blurred. Rather, sense is simply *a facet of understanding*. Thus Calvin signals his intention hereafter to substitute ‘appetite’ for ‘will’ (I.xv.7). Reason, then, is not *removed* from a privileged citadel as such. It is rather

⁵⁴⁰ Cf. his use of this for the further analysis of II.ii.12.

suggested that the citadel's walls are thoroughly porous. "Like a city breached, without walls, is one who lacks self-control" (Pr. 25:28).⁵⁴¹ Calvin's logic parallels the proverbist; thus philosophical taxonomies are highly suspect for him. The philosophers faced "great obscurity", "for they were seeking in a ruin for a building, and in scattered fragments for a well-knit structure" (I.xv.8). Human disordering is so complete that there can be no easy distinction between concupiscence and reason, between emotion and thought. (Given Calvin's commitment to body-soul dualism, this is actually a surprising result.)

[Our] nature is not only destitute and empty of good, but so fertile and fruitful of every evil that it cannot be idle. Those who have said that original sin is 'concupiscence' have used an appropriate word, if only it be added—something that most will by no means concede—that whatever is in man, from the understanding to the will, from the soul even to the flesh, has been defiled and crammed with this concupiscence. Or, to put it more briefly, the whole man is of himself nothing but concupiscence. (II.i.8)

This extreme judgment subverts medieval anthropology by massive onslaught, as if the swampy murk of the "forest" were to surge up over the slopes of the sunlit hill, obscuring any lookout there. If Galatians 5:19 truthfully describes the "fruits" of 'flesh', no optimistic conception of unaided human reason can succeed as an account. The totality of this condition implicates both *all* humanity and *every* human, to make sin 'original' (II.i.8).

It is too easily presumed that this extreme judgment reflects animosity to the stuff of concupiscence—those desires, pleasures, and interests that are in part 'emotional'. But simply to deride Calvin as effectively Manichean, risks missing that he has *not* simply widened the definition of concupiscence by declaring all pleasures concupiscible.

I will soon pause to note other respects in which he cannot be charged with Manicheism (below, page 180). For now, the point is rather that concupiscence cannot in *any* way be domesticated when it is understood to stand for the chaos resultant upon original sin's *mistrust of God's love and command*. Calvin extends Augustine's claim that original sin was sourced in pride: in rejecting the good word of God, humanity acted in faithless unconcern, not just upon a serpent-orchestrated delusion, and faithless unconcern opens the door to pride ("ambition") and subsequent disobedience. When God's love and command are no longer deemed trustworthy by someone, there is no sense in which reason can be said to rule them rightly. Rather than being an intermittent malfunction of reason, this reasoning takes the form of a lack of interest in the divine centre of the moral field. The resultant settled moral attitude involves a comprehensive failure in the orientation of the affections.

⁵⁴¹ The man concerned is, more literally, "without restraint over his spirit" (אֵין מְעַצֵּר לְרוּחוֹ). It might be a mistake to limit this to Hellenistic ἐγκράτεια, which is more restricted to the rational avoidance of excess. Cf. Michael Hill, "Paul's Concept of 'Enkrateia,'" *Reformed Theological Review* 36 (1977), 70-72, who also shows that in Paul, the picture is wider than rational mastery over excessive desire.

Reason both complies with this failure and leads it. Here indeed is Thomas's 'malice' writ large.

d) The limitations of 'natural' ethics

Faithless unconcern towards the divine centre of the moral field, and the resultant comprehensive failure in the orientation of the affections, warps humanity's apprehension of the moral field. To sustain this argument Calvin engages with 'natural' ethics. He brings this engagement with an attack upon philosophical confidence in 'freedom' of the will and in the 'kingly' rule of reason (which in his conversation is a 'queenly' rule). There is no such rule, nor any such freedom, since humanity is bogged in servitude and vice (II.ii-iii).

In Calvin's summary of contemporary faculty psychology, the 'queenly' rule of reason mediates divine things to created human faculties. "[S]ense perception is gripped by torpor and dimness of sight" but "can be tamed and gradually overcome by reason's rod" (II.ii.2). Appetite and will operate between these two, so that when appetite becomes "molded into will", it can pursue virtues and "the right way", if it follows reason's rule; or, if responding to sense, it can be "so corrupted and perverted [by sense] as to degenerate into lust." The 'will' is 'free' insofar as it turns either to reason or appetite.

But Calvin scorns this account. 'Freedom' from coercion should hardly be flattered by the noble term 'freedom', given the wearisome, predictably evil causes to which human agents regularly apply this 'freedom' (cf. III.ii.5). *Humans have no freedom to choose their loves, which is the only freedom worth the name.* Thus, the will "cannot strive after the right" (II.ii.12). "In discussing free will we are not asking whether a man is permitted to carry out and complete, despite external hindrances, whatever he has decided to do; but whether he has, in any respect whatever, both choice of judgment and inclination of will that are free." (II.iv.8) This judgment is reminiscent of Aquinas' judgment that "if this order [to the last end] be corrupted, it cannot be repaired by any intrinsic principle, but by the power of God alone" (1a2æ.88.a1.c; above, page 165).

Reason is semi-competent for some 'lower' things, but has lost the ability to penetrate supernatural things. "[T]he natural gifts were corrupted in man through sin, but his supernatural gifts were stripped from him" (II.ii.12), so "wherever the Spirit does not cast its light, all is darkness." (II.ii.21) This does not mean that darkness covers empirical enquiry (although in Calvin's view of common grace, the Spirit has a role in the natural sciences, II.ii.15). But the restoration of 'spiritual' insight by the Spirit is of an entirely different order.

This spiritual insight consists chiefly in three things: (1) knowing God; (2) knowing his fatherly favour in our behalf, in which our salvation consists; (3) knowing how to frame our life according to the rule of his law. (II.ii.18)

The third domain of this ‘spiritual’ knowledge is the stuff of ethics, and humanity’s ethical performance is seen to fall halfway between the opacity that characterises human knowledge of God (II.ii.20) and the relative clarity enjoyed in scientific enquiry (II.ii.13-16). ‘Natural’ humanity entirely ignores the ‘First Table’ of the Decalogue, but has “somewhat more understanding” of its second (II.ii.24):

Since reason, therefore, by which man distinguishes between good and evil, and by which he understands and judges, is a natural gift, it could not be completely wiped out; but it was partly weakened and partly corrupted, so that its misshapen ruins appear. (II.ii.12)

Romans 2:14-15 is uncontroversially regarded as evidence that “we surely cannot say [Gentiles] are utterly blind as to the conduct of life.” Concerning this conduct, “[t]he human mind sometimes seems more acute ... than in higher things” and there follows an interesting engagement over ‘natural law’, and *pace* Plato, ethical ‘ignorance’ remains culpable. “The sinner tries to evade his innate power to judge between good and evil”. (II.ii.22).

‘Natural’ human ethics are conspicuously arbitrary (II.ii.25). Calvin regards people as natural ‘metaethicists’ who fluctuate between modes of deliberation. They adhere to principles until specific self-interested cases make the principle ‘forgotten’. ‘Conscience’ is overridden by agents fully aware of prospective evil. Other evils can be absolutely overcome by convictions of good intention. Yet ‘incontinence’ temporarily pressures people into a true ignorance that is regretted later. This perverse human chaos is beyond taxonomy:

Our reason is overwhelmed by so many forms of deceptions, is subject to so many errors, dashes against so many obstacles, is caught in so many difficulties, that it is far from directing us aright. ... [T]he reason of our mind, wherever it may turn, is miserably subject to vanity. (II.ii.25)

Does Calvin rely here upon a medieval account of reason as simply misled? Such an assessment would miss just how radically Calvin takes reason to be misled: in opacity, it refuses reflectively to assess certain ‘emotional’ commitments. Calvin seems to be making Aquinas’ point about *malitia* to an audience which has confused that point with Aquinas’ other discussion (of reason that is distracted, bound and deluded from what it otherwise knows to be true). “[I]n all our keeping of the law we quite fail to take our concupiscence into account. For the natural man refuses to be led to recognize the diseases of his lusts ... tak[ing] no account of the evil desires that gently tickle the mind” (II.ii.24). Calvin’s ‘natural’ man here is the man Thomas spoke of as living by *certa malitia*.

The ‘tickling’ reminds us of how evil simply subtracts from the good (as seen both by Augustine and Aquinas). Calvin might agree with Hannah Arendt’s famous phrase about the ‘banality of evil’, used to devastating effect in her report on Eichmann’s trial. Throughout his trial, Eichmann never grasped any sense of culpability, and the “grotesque silliness” of his self-exonerating execution speech signified for Arendt “the fearsome, word-and-thought-defying *banality of evil*.”⁵⁴² Eichmann’s complete absence of malevolence toward Jews and his entirely uninteresting reasons for sending thousands of them to death revolved exclusively around various mundane desires for achievement and standing within his own local social networks. Eichmann’s petty concerns reflect the concupiscible ‘tickling’ that Calvin describes. The kind of ‘malice’ that Thomas describes is *not* what we mean by ‘malicious’, and in precisely this kind of way: *malitia* merely elevates minor goods in love, and is unconcerned about divine goods—including in this case, the divine claim upon Eichmann to love Jews.

e) *Staunchly anti-Manichean statements*

What Calvin has presented to us is so gloomy that we should pause to remember the sustained anti-Manichean emphasis of the *Institutes*. Calvin knew how easily his far-reaching condemnation of humanity could be misunderstood. “[I]t is a very important question whether the wound has been inflicted from outside or has been present from the beginning” (II.i.10). Ecclesiastes 7:29 is used (where “God made human beings straightforward, but they have devised many schemes”) to show how ‘nature’ *vis-à-vis* humanity is explicitly used in two distinct senses: of created perfection where there is no evil, and of humanity’s current habitual state.⁵⁴³ ‘Natural corruption’ is an “adventitious quality which comes upon man” but that nonetheless “holds all men fast by hereditary right” (II.i.11). This steers between a Pelagian Scylla, where “brazen confidence” is justified, and a Manichean Charybdis, where ‘righteousness’ is beyond the domain of human competence because of a principle of primordial dualism (II.ii.1). Against both, ‘man’ must “be instructed to aspire to a good of which he is empty, to a freedom of which he has been deprived” (II.ii.1).

Whilst arguing for the once-ordered affections of humanity, Calvin also insists upon the goodness of the body. ‘Glowing sparks’ of the *imago dei* are found there (I.xv.3).⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴² Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil (Revised and Enlarged)* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977; originally published New York: Viking Press, 1964), 252.

⁵⁴³ Cf. I.i.2; I.xiv.3; II.i.10-11. See also Calvin, 38 n.7.

⁵⁴⁴ This is the same passage wherein occurs the “affections kept within the bounds of reason” passage, quoted above, 174, which I have elided here by ellipsis:

Notwithstanding his body-soul dualism, this constitutes a robust defence against Manicheism, bolstered further by the solidly ‘creationist’ account of the soul’s origin (I.xv.5).⁵⁴⁵ Elsewhere, restoration of the original integrity of the *imago* is christologically constituted;⁵⁴⁶ and a thoroughly physical final resurrection body, though perfected, is in direct continuity with the old order (III.xxv.6-7). Also, Calvin easily accommodates within these defences a ‘righteous’ role for the affections, even though that they are now so radically disordered in a manner that he expects all readers to find obvious.

But how might this ‘righteous’ role for the affections be found if “the whole man is of himself nothing but concupiscence”? “In his elect the Lord cures these diseases in a way that we shall soon explain” (II.iii.3). It is a ‘way’ that “restores us to true and complete integrity” and constitutes “the beginning of our recovery of salvation” (I.xv.4)

3. Love ‘commended’ and ‘poured in’

In this section, I will show how love is ‘commended’ and ‘poured in’ according to Calvin. Instead of faithless unconcern toward God, the affections begin to serve in a ‘righteous’ role. Divine love toward humanity makes a claim upon people, even when they do not discern the moral field in a way that elicits their love. New governance for the affections occurs in the recognition of this divine love claim. The pneumatological restoration that follows is fundamentally christological in various respects, entailing a certain kind of knowledge of Christ that alters the affections. (The divine claim of love, and the christological orientation of divine restoration, are conceptions in which Calvin differs from Aquinas.) The heartfelt enjoyment of people that follows becomes Calvin’s basis for ethics—a ‘loving embrace’ of various neighbour’s ‘beauty’. The account opens the way for virtue to be understood humbly. In the first-person, each virtue becomes statement of aim (but *not* self-description). Each can also be a statement of description and affirmation towards second- and third-persons.

a) A governance of the affections

Humanity requires instruction in goods and freedoms unknown to it (II.ii.1), and this instruction pertains to the affections.

[T]he likeness of God extends to the whole excellence by which man’s nature towers over all the kinds of living creatures. ... [A]lthough the primary seat of the divine image was in the mind and heart, or in the soul and its powers, yet there was no part of man, not even the body itself, in which some sparks did not glow. It is sure that even in the several parts of the world some traces of God’s glory shine. (Ibid., 188.)

⁵⁴⁵ Cf. above, 175 n.539.

⁵⁴⁶ In I.xv.4, Christ is celebrated as the truest human image of God, offering epistemic (and even existential) access to those respects in which we ourselves are in God’s image.

Here [is] the best bridle to control all passions: the thought that nothing is better than to practice righteousness by obeying God's commandments; then, that the ultimate goal of the happy life is to be loved by him. (II.i.4)

This statement, although brief,⁵⁴⁷ has significant implications.

1. The 'passions' were not somehow ontologically different in paradise (although there, they are called 'affections'). Their disordering arises straightforwardly from mistrust of God. Thus pre-fall humanity is not understood as being devoid of affections, and pre-fall humanity has 'bridled passions'.
2. This mistrust has a proximal and an ultimate expression, which both seem to be the hallmarks of autonomy. Proximally, the divine command is deemed worthless. Ultimately, "to be loved by" God is deemed worthless.
3. Calvin is formally eudaimonistic; but materially, we wonder (as with Augustine) if the label is apt, since the use of the passive ("be loved by") seems remarkable. Rather than locating the eudaimonistic premise in the agent's love for God, the *reception* of God's own love is integral to human happiness (reminiscent of the effect, according to Augustine, of God's "incorporeal embrace"⁵⁴⁸). If classical eudaimonism is fundamentally egoistic, here the benefit to the self is incidental to the emphasis upon loving *interrelationship*, where the focus of each is upon the excellence of the other, to their benefit.
4. Apparently, divine commands are unintelligible without a divine love-relationship.
5. Clearly, dismissal of the divine love and command creates a 'vacuum' that only the passions can fill.
6. Passion 'bridled' by faith in God's love and command represents not repression, but rather a true 'ordering'. The passionate side of experience is given a 'home'.

There is a net effect to be found among these implications. Returning to my painful personal example, I find that whatever my confusions about my place and my responses within the natural order of my situation, *God claims me in that place, and claims me in his love toward me*. Divine commands, for all their force, are a *subsidiary* element in this claim. Therefore whether or not I discern the moral field in a way that rightly elicits my love, this *divine* love (and its commands) stands so much in the foreground of the moral field as to

⁵⁴⁷ "By nature," says Calvin, "I love brevity" (!), III.vi.1.

⁵⁴⁸ See above, page 113.

eclipse any misinterpretations of my place and responses within the natural order of my situation. In this way, Calvin's brief statement is of love both 'commended' and 'poured in'.⁵⁴⁹

Calvin therefore seeks to reveal the priority of this divine claim, which is constituted in God's love towards people, rather than primarily in an obligation to love God. This is a different kind of solution to the problem of *malitia* than Thomas's. Rather than only inviting me to a rightful response to my soul's true end, the claim of divine love upon me becomes the major object of attention. These two approaches to the problem of *malitia* are difficult to synthesise. It is not that they are contradictory (although one reading of divine impassibility will make them so). Rather, they each give a different kind of access to the moral field. In Calvin's case, access to the moral field becomes more obviously based upon the person and work of Christ.

b) Spiritual and christological restoration

God's redemptive agency, which "restores us to true and complete integrity" and constitutes "the beginning of our recovery of salvation" (I.xv.4), is considered from II.iv. We shall find Christ to be central to this account.

"[G]ood takes its origin from God alone", yet "only in the elect does one find a will inclined to good" (II.iii.8), since in the language of Jeremiah 32:39-40 and Ezekiel 11:19, God has 'replaced' their 'hearts'. In the restorative action of God, "man is not borne along without any motion of the heart, as if by an outside force; rather, he is so affected within that he obeys from the heart" (II.iii.14), for "who is such a fool as to assert that God moves man just as we throw a stone?" (II.v.14). The work of restoration, then, is not coercive (such as the throwing of stones) but affective, and involves the Holy Spirit's alteration of human values and commitments (cf. II.ii.7-10; II.iii.10,13). The logic of the replaced heart recalls Aquinas insofar as it is a logic of the Spirit working through the Word, but it differs by being more overtly christological.

God works in his elect in two ways: within, through his Spirit; without, through his Word. By his Spirit, illuminating their minds and forming their hearts to the love and cultivation of righteousness, he makes them a new creation. By his Word, he arouses them to desire, to seek after, and to attain that same renewal. (II.v.5)

Love and cultivation of righteousness, as enacted by God, solves *malitia* much like Thomas envisaged, just as the arousal to desire reminds us of the role Aquinas gave to Christ's teaching for the ordering of passion.

⁵⁴⁹ For a further comment on "obeying God's commandments" as *love* commended, also see below (238) for Calvin's teleological understanding of divine command.

But although the instrumentality of the Spirit is the Word, it is not just Word *qua* Christ's evangelical teaching. Rather this 'Word' is understood as that which introduces us to Christ. Therefore the work of the Spirit is thoroughly contingent upon Christ, and although restored humanity is a return to the *imago* envisaged by the Creator, reflection upon the creation account is necessary but not sufficient for restoration. Christ is the truest access point for a true knowledge of humanity, and the Spirit's agency begins with a beholding of Christ.

Christ is more than an point of incarnational epistemic access to the image of God in humanity, although he is at least that (I.xv.4). Rather Christ is himself an active agent in the restoration. Hence he is introduced as the basis for humanity's salvation (II.vi) *between* a treatment of humanity's plight and a treatment of humanity's intersection with the law. Battles notes the significant placement of this chapter, new to the 1559 edition, as crucial to the *Institutes*' architectonics.⁵⁵⁰

[T]he focal point of the *Institutes* is not found in God's sovereignty, or in predestination, or in insistence on obedience to God's Word itself, apart from constant reference to Jesus Christ, whom the written Word makes known.⁵⁵¹

Many modes of christological restoration are pursued, which are unfortunately beyond our scope. But interesting examples of these modes are found in Calvin's various uses of 2 Corinthians 3:18 (where Paul says that "we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit"). In I.xv.4 the text is picked up to emphasise how Christ is the true image of God, to whom people must look for change. In III.ii.20 the text is used to show how Christ's work in the gospel, representing as it does a promise of forgiveness and reconciliation, reminds fearful people of God's good intention toward them to help their restoration, so banishing all thought of God as a "deadly enemy". Effectively, the text is used to reiterate how divine love toward people is revealed by Christ in his gospel. In III.iii.9, the text is used in connection with a discussion of people participating in Christ's death and resurrection. Also, Paul's identification of the Spirit with "the Lord" (whom Calvin takes to be the Lord Christ) obviously helps to form Calvin's conception of pneumatological renewal as fundamentally christological.

Understanding Christ as humanity's saviour, exemplar and telos (III.vi) entails that a certain kind of "knowledge of Christ" is properly "received only when it possesses the whole soul", and must find "a seat and resting place in the inmost affections of the heart" (III.vi.4). This is the substantive affective element to the Spirit's restorative work through the Word. The

⁵⁵⁰ Calvin, 340 n.1 (Battles' note).

⁵⁵¹ Ibid., lvi (Battles' introduction).

method and effects of this restoration are similar in some respects to what we saw in Thomas. But in light of the christological concerns I signalled above (page 166), we should note Calvin's more successful attempt to describe the restoration in christological terms, even if I have not examined the attempt in enough detail.

c) The restored 'Life of the Christian Man'

Calvin's brief personal ethic, "The Life of the Christian Man" (III.vi-x), began as a separate treatise.⁵⁵² It summarises 'ordered' life as "some universal rule" (III.vi.1); the ethic is not comprehensive and readers are directed to "the homilies of the fathers" for a normative literature of "exhortations" and "[descriptions of] individual virtues at length". The 'universal rule' brings new intelligibility to business practice, to suffering, and to the onset of death. The treatise relies upon Calvin's continued treatment of the affections.

The knowledge of Christ that "possesses the whole soul" and "finds a seat and resting place in the inmost affections of the heart" (III.vi.4) is contrasted to knowledge that resides in "memory alone, as other disciplines are".

No denotative definition is offered for 'heart', but ostensibly, it is the domain of (what moderns call) commitments, values, 'will' and impulse (labels no less mysterious than 'heart'). Calvin's language is consonant with the NT in its use of καρδία and the OT antecedents in לֵב, terms under which Bible writers gather the cognitive, emotional and volitional elements of human existence. In a recurrent contrast between 'knowledge' that either "flits in the brain" (*cerebrum*, I.v.9) or "takes root in the heart" (*cor*, I.v.9), Calvin's emphasis upon the latter gives an "existential"⁵⁵³ approach with clear subjective elements; indeed, knowledge that is *not* affective is probably not of the heart, and is suspect.⁵⁵⁴ The reordering of affection is seen in polemic against unnamed Christian opponents: the "efficacy" of the "gospel on the tips of their tongues ... ought to penetrate the inmost affections of the heart, take its seat in the soul, and affect the whole man a hundred times more deeply than the cold exhortations of the philosophers!" (III.vi.4).

However once such a reordering of "inmost affections of the heart" has taken hold, "we are not our own" (III.vii.1; cf. 1 Cor. 6:19-20), and in 'self-denial', new attachments form and old attachments ("the yearning to possess, the desire for power, and the favor of men") are

⁵⁵² Ibid., xlii. n.19 & lx. n.65 (Battles' introduction and notes). Given its subsequent placement between two major discussions of faith (III.ii-iii and III.xi; III.iv-v is polemical digression), abstraction from its theological structure clearly violates this ethic.

⁵⁵³ Ibid., 62 n.29 (Battles' note); cf. III.ii.8, III.ii.33; and III.ii.36.

⁵⁵⁴ All the thinkers profiled in Part I of this thesis should approve, excepting Kant, and B.F. Skinner (who is unsure about actually having a heart).

dissolved. Unconcern towards God becomes a disposition of focussed attention upon “God’s decision and judgment” which displaces vices from the heart (III.vii.2).

Such a displacement then affects our view of human persons, making it possible “not to consider men’s evil intentions but to look upon the image of God in them, which cancels and effaces their transgressions, and with its beauty and dignity allures us to love and embrace them” (III.vii.6). The beauty and allure of the image of God in people—not some emanated image,⁵⁵⁵ but one fundamentally connected to their selves as uniquely created by God—is that “to which we owe all honor and love” (III.vii.6). Therefore Calvin rejects mere “perform[ance of] all the duties of love”, enjoining fulfilment of them “from a sincere feeling of love” (III.vii.7). Thus business practise (III.vii.8-9) ceases to be governed by the consequentialisms of either expansion or necessity. It exists in the service of people.

The point we have arrived at, it seems, is the enjoyment of God (but ‘in Christ’) and the enjoyment of others in God. Calvin is adamant: the enjoyment is *heartfelt*.

d) A way to humble virtue

Karl Barth understood ethics to spring more easily from Calvin than from Luther (who valiantly applied himself to ethical thought nonetheless). Commenting on the Geneva Catechism, Barth understood Calvin to be saying that

true knowledge of God [follows] as we come to awareness of the honor we owe him. But the way in which to pay this honour is fourfold, (1) by putting our whole trust in him, (2) by seeking to serve him with our whole lives and doing his will, (3) by calling upon him in need and seeking salvation and every good thing in him, and finally (4) by recognizing him with the heart and mouth as the ‘sole author’ of all good.⁵⁵⁶

I hope by now to have shown that Calvin’s solution to what Aquinas called *malitia* entails something like what Barth has said. To honour the claim of God entails trust, service, and forms of dependence. The claims of divine commands are a subsidiary element within the divine claim of love.

But the dependence includes a recognition of God as the author of all good—therefore what does this dependence entail for *virtue*? Remembering my painful example, is there any sense in which I can rightly describe my outburst as an uncharacteristic aspect of a generally ordered and virtuous life? Protestant ethics since Calvin has tended toward a very negative assessment here. Any such estimate of myself as generally virtuous seems (firstly) to accrue to myself some good of which I, not God, am the putative author—which is

⁵⁵⁵ See above, 175 n.539.

⁵⁵⁶ Barth, *Calvin*, 77.

(secondly) all the more problematic when the occasion of this assessment is the irruption of several vices! Such an accrual of goodness to myself, occasioned by evil, causes Protestant thought to suspect that I might rather be exhibiting exactly the kind of faithless unconcern toward God that disorients my affections and causes me to name evil as good, so warranting precisely the kind of polemic that fills the *Institutes*. It is exactly this kind of use of virtue which propels Calvin to say that

when man has been taught that no good thing remains in his power, and that he is hedged about on all sides by most miserable necessity, in spite of this he should nevertheless be instructed to aspire to a good of which he is empty, to a freedom of which he has been deprived. In fact, he may thus be more sharply aroused from inactivity than if it were supposed that he was endowed with the highest virtues. (II.ii.1)

Any self-description in terms of virtue risks hubris, and inveigles me from my primary call to love God and thereby to embrace my wife's beauty in love. Instead of pondering my virtues, I am to direct my attention in the first instance toward the claims of divine love upon me and toward the subsidiary claim of the divine command upon me, so as to displace vice and to cause me to look to Christ, finally to embrace my wife's beauty in love. But can virtue ever proceed on such an account, if I am "more sharply aroused from inactivity than if it were supposed" that I am "endowed with the highest virtues"?

In the "The Life of the Christian Man", readers are directed to "the homilies of the fathers" for a normative literature of "exhortations" and for "[descriptions of] individual virtues at length". Clearly Calvin has nothing against virtue as particularly understood, and he regularly uses virtue terminology *in reference to third parties* and as *statements of aim*. Virtue, then, can have this kind of place in an account of the relationship between ethics and emotion. Rather than each virtue operating as a statement of *self-description*, each virtue becomes a statement for *affirmation given and received*, or for describing *a manner of life sought* by someone. In the case of my painful example, virtue-as-aim (and correlative instruction to love God and to embrace others in love) frees me from a petty focus upon my own self-justification, just as it also frees me from habitual self-reproach over vices that may (or may not) have been in evidence at that time. To access virtue in the ways I have described here retains consistency with the virtue of humility.



In this chapter, I have shown Calvin addressing that faithless unconcern towards God which Thomas called *malitia*. We have also seen how, under the claim of divine love the comes finally through Christ, a restoration can occur. This restoration effects a fundamental affective reorientation, including a heartfelt enjoyment of others.

Calvin and Aquinas have spoken between them to both sides of a dialectic within Augustine. While Aquinas emphasises the structures of love's responses within a divinely ordered natural situation, Calvin emphasises the claims of divine love upon people who exhibit faithless unconcern toward God.

In different ways, Augustine, Aquinas and Calvin all understand that a chasm of sorts must be crossed. For Augustine, the heart must finally rest in God. For Aquinas, *malitia* can only be overcome by the work of God. For Calvin, faithless unconcern must come under the claim of divine love. For each, only when this chasm is crossed can there be a proper consonance between emotion and ethics.

This chasm is the subject of Søren Kierkegaard's work. Kierkegaard understood the implications of it for a modern age. Though perhaps an unlikely source, he describes a 'leap' away from both random passion and 'objectivity', toward a primal affection to God. I turn to him in the next chapter.

Chapter VII: Leaping with Kierkegaard (but where?)

[T]hough we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. (2 Cor. 5:16, NRSV)

εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν.
(2 Cor. 5:16, NA26)

Christianity did not come into the world (as the parsons snivellingly and falsely introduce it) as an admirable example of the gentle art of consolation—but as *the absolute*. It is out of love God wills it so, but it is also *God* who wills it, and He wills what He will. He will not suffer himself to be transformed by men and be a nice . . . human God: He will transform men, and that he wills out of love. He will have nothing to do with man's pert inquiry about why and why [*sic*] did Christianity come into the world: it is and shall be the absolute.⁵⁵⁷

In the theologians examined so far, we have seen all senses of 'the logic of love' to have been apparent.⁵⁵⁸ We have especially seen how *love has an ordinant logic*, insofar as a good and ordered moral field is the substrate that elicits human love. But this ordinant logic is unclear to people, therefore we have also seen a 'grammar' to the divine reordering of love. It is a logic of love both 'poured in' and 'commended'.

Augustine, Aquinas and Calvin all understand that a 'chasm' of sorts must be crossed. For Augustine, the heart must finally rest in God. For Aquinas, *malitia* can only be overcome by the work of God. For Calvin, faithless unconcern must come under the claim of divine love. For each, only when this chasm is crossed can there be a proper consonance between emotion and ethics. The purpose of this chapter is to describe how Søren Kierkegaard understands the 'chasm' to be crossed, and the implications of this crossing for ongoing moral deliberation.

Kierkegaard describes a 'leap' away from both random passion and 'objectivity', toward a primal affection for God. It is a 'leap' across the 'chasm'. The quotations above hint at the nature and magnitude of this 'leap' that although not irrationalist, is still a 'leap' of sorts. The 'leap' exposes another facet of the 'logic of love' as it pertains to *deliberative logic*. Deliberative logic has a subjective nature, being imbued with love. Deliberative logic has its loves.

Such an understanding of deliberative logic has been more implicit than explicit among the thinkers we have examined, but Søren Kierkegaard vigorously makes explicit this affective aspect of deliberative logic. For him, movements of the affections are always central to

⁵⁵⁷ Søren Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity* (1850), tr. Walter Lowrie, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941), 66 (hereafter *Practice* for the more usual ET title *Practice in Christianity*).

⁵⁵⁸ See above, 70, for the two broad senses of this term each of which include two complementary aspects.

moral deliberation. Such movements should be grounded in, and will then reflect an ongoing expression of, the 'leap' of primal affection towards God.

In the five subsections of this chapter, I will describe Kierkegaard's 'leap of love' and his related exposition of affective deliberative logic as follows. I will deny existentialist readings while appropriating 'psychological' readings of Kierkegaard (Section One), and I will go on to describe his hostility to 'objectivity' (Section Two). By examining the 'stand-off' in *Either-Or* between the aesthete and the Judge (Section Three), I will show how the stand-off is best resolved by forms of so-called 'Christian emotion', even if Kierkegaard's conception of these is inadequate (Section Four). Kierkegaard therefore leaves us positioned to outflank some major Nietzschean objections to a moral theology of emotion (Section Five). I will now pause to outline these sections in slightly more detail.

In Section One, I will argue against an existentialist reading of Kierkegaard. He agrees with our other theological protagonists that the adventitious nature of love 'poured in' is not necessarily problematic. This agreement causes him to be regarded as an existentialist, but existentialist readings actually represent a *moderation* of Kierkegaard away from the theological grounds of his argument. Whilst rejecting existentialist readings, I will suggest that it remains fruitful to examine a psychological aspect of Kierkegaard's work.

Section Two outlines Kierkegaard's objection to 'objectivity', an objection that dictates his odd literary methods. 'Objective' thought obscures the embodied nature of human life. Human thought about humanity should more properly be 'subjective', thereby requiring respect for the passions. For Kierkegaard, 'passion' describes both our interests, and their defence and promotion. 'Passionlessness' reduces action, and passion should arise from Christian truth properly understood. Kierkegaard deploys a cluster of special writing strategies to reengage and redirect the passions, causing finite readers to wrestle with 'infinite' and 'absolute' concerns, and inviting readers to consider what is their own 'stage' of life in this wrestling.

I will examine *Either-Or* in Section Three, showing how it develops a 'stand-off' between an 'aesthete' and a judge. The aesthete proclaims frivolous abandon against boredom, but his credo merely seems horrible when the amoral aimlessness of an aesthetic 'seducer', Johannes, comes to light. Judge William prises open such unliveable aspects of the aesthetic position, commending a life of responsible choice-making as the more meaningful. But the Judge seems too boring for the aesthete, hence there is a stand-off. *Either-Or* goes on to suggest that Christianity can retain the best of both the aesthete and the judge, and this conclusion heralds Kierkegaard's wider project.

How then is this synthesis, this ‘baptising’ of the ethicist’s reason and the aesthete’s passion, achieved in the ‘true Christian’? In Section Four I will consider a set of ‘Christian emotions’ that Kierkegaard understands to form Christian consciousness. These emotions start with ‘despair’ and traverse ‘faith’ to incorporate ‘love, ‘joy’ and ‘gladness’, albeit with some space for more negative social engagements. But in anticipation of my next chapter, I will suggest that Kierkegaard’s conclusions as to what constitutes Christian emotion do not match those of the NT writers. He offers a prolegomena, as it were, to a Christian account of affective deliberative logic.

But in Section Five, I will show how despite any shortcomings in Kierkegaard’s account, he amply outflanks some major Nietzschean objections to a moral theology of emotion. The claim stands upon a deep *agreement* between Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, where both defend subjectivity, passion, and ‘self-overcoming’, and where both agree that Christian ‘sin’ is indeed a ‘madness’ when seen from the ground upon which Nietzsche stands. This deep agreement renders Nietzsche’s arguments insufficient to discredit Christianity since for Kierkegaard, even emotional experiences require the recognition of a wider order. Nietzschean ‘affirmation of life’ just brings boredom, and slave morality is not finally Christian, just as true Christian leadership is not finally ascetic or self-interested. Christian faith brings joyful, alluring, relaxed responses to created order, which compete easily against Nietzsche’s restless voracity.

1. Looking before leaping

Before turning to the main argument of this section, a short pause and summary will assist us to grasp Kierkegaard’s particular contribution to our enquiry.

In the scientific study of emotions, their ethical ‘use’ is at best a curiosity; while in the rationalist study of ethics, emotions are effluvial.⁵⁵⁹ A ‘Nietzschean alternative’ places emotionally driven action at the centre of moral order—either an order of rank; or, less easily (and perhaps less coherently), a liberal political order that seeks to maximise personal freedoms while minimising harms.

A moral-theological framework resembles Nietzsche insofar as ‘emotions’ are not considered to be unimportant, since deliberation to action continually appears at the interstices of emotion and reason. Thus ‘emotion’ and ‘reason’ are resolvable in an unfamiliar way, coming to be seen as facets of what humans experience as set within a pluriform moral field of interlocking goods, with humanity constituted in this field in being,

⁵⁵⁹ For completeness, we could almost add that in the empiricist emotivist study of ethics, *reasons* were effluvial; but this might be to oversimplify.

in knowledge, and in love. Disordered humanity responds in (Nietzschean) voracity and selective sight, where various goods become focal, and other emotions follow ‘consanguineously’, as it were (e.g. fear and anger at the prospective loss of those goods, or sadness at their irremediable loss). But ordered under God, humanity learns of goods forgotten and begins to love these again. The mysterious work of Christ’s Spirit is indispensable to this reordering. Again, emotions follow ‘consanguineously’, although patterns from the old (dis)order remain as this reordering proceeds. The atoning death of Christ guarantees that moral failure during this time of reordering does not jeopardise the relationship of divine covenantal love within which it occurs.

Søren Kierkegaard is “a kind of theologian”⁵⁶⁰ who stands after Kant and before Nietzsche. He is situated within an aesthetic discourse of expressive self-fulfilment (like our ‘emotion’) and another discourse of rational contemplation (like our ‘ethics’). But his longstanding interest in subjectivity, and a conviction that ‘objectivity’ could result in an unconcerned moral inertia, meant that he found *both* of these discourses to be severely wanting (unlike Nietzsche, who *substituted* the discourse of expressive self-fulfilment for the unsatisfying discourse of rational contemplation).

All agree that there is a playful, ironic complexity to Kierkegaard’s thought. Nonetheless, there emerges from it a positive program with clear parallels to Augustine, whether or not a debt to Augustine is overt. Kierkegaard is of interest to us precisely because his ‘Augustinian’ program post-dates Kant and, as I will argue, anticipates and pre-empts Nietzsche.

For Kierkegaard, people will understand neither themselves nor their world without a prior ‘leap’ of love. In *Either/Or*, this claim confronts both the emotional and wayward aesthetic, and the prim, boring, rationalising ‘Judge’. But the ‘leap’ is neither into irrationality, nor to secure a ‘castle’ of faith ‘in the air’. Rather, the ‘leap’ concerns a radical reorientation of love. Such a reorientation will bring changes to the workings of deliberative reason, since these workings are already heavily biased by various loves. In subsequent Christian works, Kierkegaard will go on to show how this ‘leap’ of love cannot proceed without love for God as its irreducible first movement of importance.

Therefore Kierkegaard promotes a radical subjectivity that takes human emotion very seriously. However, he also acknowledges the wider moral field within which humanity is situated. On his account, it becomes fitting to cultivate certain ‘Christian emotions’, where

⁵⁶⁰ David J. Gouwens, *Kierkegaard as Religious Thinker* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). 12.

there is deep consonance between the objective truths of this moral field, and our subjective evaluation of it. Kierkegaard is, therefore, more Augustinian than existentialist.

In this section, I will argue against an existentialist reading of Kierkegaard. He agrees with our other theological protagonists that the adventitious nature of love ‘poured in’ is not necessarily problematic. This agreement causes him to be regarded as an existentialist, but existentialist readings actually represent a *moderation* of Kierkegaard away from the theological grounds of his argument. While rejecting existentialist readings, I will suggest that it remains fruitful to examine a psychological aspect of Kierkegaard’s work.

a) An adventitious problem

I will comment upon *existentialist* readings of Kierkegaard by way of an agreement common to our theological protagonists. Each agrees, in their logic of ‘love poured in’, that the reordering of affection is *adventitious*—that in some respect, humans do not have a liberty of indifference, and that a change in affection is not ours to control, requiring divine assistance.

In Scripture, *wind* is a paradigmatic metaphor of adventitious reordering. It blows where it pleases (Jn 3:8). Against the Pelagians, Augustine insisted on such adventitious change (alongside his emphasis on divine rescue at the cross). With Augustine, Calvin carefully reprises Augustinian themes of election,⁵⁶¹ as consequent to the totality of human depravation and the correlative necessity of divine rescue, and as correlative to the phenomenon of adventitious change. The infusion of the Spirit in Aquinas also grapples with the adventitious, although differently.

Correspondingly, Martha Nussbaum’s attraction to the Nietzschean alternative is against what is, to her, the element of fluke in Augustine:

Right willing [Augustine] insists, depends upon desire for a good object; ... a response of desire and love that is summoned up in us by an external call and is not perfectly ours to control. ... [T]here is no reliable relationship between the character of our human efforts and the likelihood of being called in the requisite way.⁵⁶²

This is a “world of chance encounters”,⁵⁶³ where Augustine’s prayer “to become responsive to ... only the right stimuli ... does not guarantee success.”⁵⁶⁴ Thus “Augustinian love does

⁵⁶¹ I say ‘carefully’, given the repeated caveats and calls to epistemic humility of *Inst.* III.xxi.1-4; and given also the sixteen preceding christological chapters (II.vi-xvii) and twenty preceding chapters on covenantal blessing (III.i-xx). There is no seventeenth-century methodology here (where a [Newtonian] temporal primacy of election governed various attempts at an *ordo salutis*).

⁵⁶² Nussbaum, “Augustine and Dante,” 67.

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, 69.

not retain sufficient respect for the lover's freedom and choice."⁵⁶⁵ In this reading of it, theology's adventitious reordering is regarded, self-evidently, as a problem.

Although Søren Kierkegaard offers no prominent account of humanity's adventitious reordering from the divine perspective, he can nonetheless disagree that it is problematic from the human perspective.

Human beings located upon the moral field we have described are finally confronted by God, *the absolute*. In Christ, God calls forth an unequivocal response. Certainly, there was nothing so overtly obvious about Christ that would make his contemporaries cease to regard him "from a human point of view" (2 Cor. 5:16), to regard him instead as God incarnate, no less. This change of perception is a change toward the 'infinite'; thus no particular chain of logic can bring it about. (In the same way, sinners finally require a divine revelation concerning their sin, if to regard it as more than merely ignorance.) But subjectively, there need be nothing 'chancy' about the presence or absence of the appropriate response. It is not adventitious in that sense, and Kierkegaard sets about diagnosing the *psychological dispositions* that cause people *not* to make the response, whilst also setting these against Christian truth, which is sufficient to elicit the response.⁵⁶⁶

The massive volume of Kierkegaard's work, representing the steady output of more than ten years, seeks to immerse people in these psychological dispositions, to bring a deep sense of identification with them. Readers first 'experience' the great appeal of these dispositions, but eventually begin to 'discover' the profound failings inherent in each disposition. This opens the way for the proper response to Christian truth. Before Kierkegaard's 'treatment', there was resistance to this truth, given the undeniable appeal of each psychological disposition. But the way to truth is open when this appeal is 'deflated', in light of the disposition's weaknesses.

The net effect is not to deny that the Spirit blows where he will. But it is emphatically to deny that the journey of a Paul or an Augustine (or even, improbably enough, a Kierkegaard) is unintelligible. Such a journey can be presented to whoever has not yet made it, in the expectation that they do finally make it (and so find their true self). (Here then is a logic of love commended in Kierkegaard.)

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid., 71.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid., 80.

⁵⁶⁶ This paragraph is my attempt at a rough overview of Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments* (1844), tr. David F. Swenson, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1936); Søren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death* (1849), tr. Alastair Hannay, *Penguin Classics* edition, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1989); and Kierkegaard, *Practice*.

b) Kierkegaard as existentialist

Yet even so, Kierkegaard might be taken to exacerbate (rather than to alleviate) the adventitious problem, given the perception of a certain arbitrariness about his writing. Alastair Hannay, commenting on the *despair* Kierkegaard holds to be universally present in whoever stands wrongly before God, asks if “Kierkegaard has discovered [a] need in himself ... not altogether untypical of certain kinds of people with certain kinds of background”. If so, he merely generalises a personal problem—which a “modern way” would treat as illness.⁵⁶⁷ Hannay, though, can acknowledge how Kierkegaard might stand on an alternative ground of inner consistency.

But it is possible to look at it the other way around. ... What is exceptional about people like Kierkegaard might be not so much that they are in the unfortunate position of having to contend with this special problem, but that they are in the unusual position of being able to see that there is this problem.⁵⁶⁸

For Robert Solomon, Kierkegaard presents a psychological *fait accompli*. What reasons Kierkegaard does give for making the journey to God “are not logically compelling, but they may be compelling for some individual.”⁵⁶⁹ Solomon deploys a Sartrean reading of Kierkegaard,⁵⁷⁰ where Christianity is Kierkegaard’s personal instantiation of a more primal, radical free choice:

Belief in God ... is a matter of passion, not knowledge. ... For Kierkegaard, it is the *manner* and *intensity* of one’s belief, and not the object or objective necessity of belief, which determines truth.⁵⁷¹

What counts in matters of religion and in all matters of life is personal passion, not knowledge or reason. ... [W]hat matters is what one *chooses* for oneself, and then ... *how* one chooses ... The dogmas of Christianity are not plausible; they are not even intelligible, according to Kierkegaard. ... Becoming a Christian is a choice of a way of life, a hard, but for some individuals like Kierkegaard, a psychologically (not logically) necessary choice.⁵⁷²

Existence [is] living passionately, choosing one’s own existence and committing oneself to a certain way of life. ... Kierkegaard’s own chosen way of life was Christianity ...⁵⁷³

⁵⁶⁷ In Kierkegaard, *Sickness*, 18.

⁵⁶⁸ Hannay, in *ibid.*, 18-19.

⁵⁶⁹ Robert C. Solomon, *From Rationalism to Existentialism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 97.

⁵⁷⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 69, Solomon’s opening comment on Kierkegaard: “[B]ecause of the respect bestowed on [Kierkegaard] by ... Heidegger, Jaspers, and Sartre, he became generally recognised as the founder of [existentialism. It] is nowhere given a more poetic or more explicit statement than in the writings of Søren Kierkegaard.”

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁵⁷² Robert C. Solomon, *Continental Philosophy Since 1750: The Rise and Fall of the Self. A History of Western Philosophy*, vol. 7 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 89-90, 91-92.

⁵⁷³ Robert C. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgins, *A Short History of Philosophy* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 226-27.

Thus Kierkegaard's thought constitutes a form of irrationalism.⁵⁷⁴ Kierkegaard does not deal in reason, which "play[s] virtually no role whatever" in delineating the good human life,⁵⁷⁵ and "[t]he attempt to rationalise Christianity is nothing other than the attempt to make being a Christian emotionally empty."⁵⁷⁶ Thus Kierkegaard becomes another rascal in Solomon's 'Myth of the Passions', albeit that he is presented as an apologist for the feelingful side of the split.

Kierkegaard, however, will not so easily succumb to the charge of irrationalism, or to the implication that Christianity is one radical choice among many. Anti-Climacus, for example, spares no quarter:

Whether a person has been miraculously helped essentially depends on with what passion of mind he has grasped that help was impossible, and in the next instance on how honest he is towards the power which nevertheless helped him. But people as a rule do neither one nor the other; they shriek that help is impossible without ever taxing their minds on how to find help, and afterwards they ungratefully lie.⁵⁷⁷

This typically Kierkegaardian confluence of the ethical, the emotional, and the thoughtful ("honest", "passion", "taxing their minds") *prima facie* commends him to our enquiry. A repeated juxtaposition of the 'aesthetic', the 'ethical', and the 'religious'; an exploration of 'subjective' against 'objective' thought; an analysis of despair resolved through the recognition of sin, to the end of faith and love—throughout the entire corpus, these interrogate both unbelief, and the disconnection of passion from reason.

Certainly, he knows how "excessively stupid" it would be to deny that pagan aesthetics generate "amazing feats" for inspiration and admiration, or to deny that "natural man" tastefully exploits "every favour granted, even letting art and science serve to heighten, embellish and refine the pleasure."⁵⁷⁸ But Anti-Climacus would nevertheless reject our blithely 'pagan' acceptance, for example, of the rightness always to treat depression (a form of despair) as a merely biological plight. "[T]he aesthetic point of view with its absence of spirit does not provide the criterion of what is despair and what is not", for "the point of view which must be adopted is that of the ethico-religious". Every life where "capacities [are taken] only to be natural powers, unconscious in a deeper sense of where it has them

⁵⁷⁴ Solomon, *From Rationalism*, 34.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁵⁷⁷ Kierkegaard, *Sickness*, 70. Anti-Climacus' comment is reminiscent of Augustine's wry sarcasm against antagonistic Romans. Despite their blaming Christianity for the 410 sack of Rome, Christ orchestrated their personal survival through basilica sanctuaries and pagan respect for Christ. Without such rescue, no Roman could make their polemic, being dead. (Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 4-5, I.1.)

⁵⁷⁸ Kierkegaard, *Sickness*, 76, as for quotations following.

from”—“however much it can account for even the whole of existence, however intense its aesthetic enjoyment”—every such life, regarding itself as unaccountable, “is none the less despair.”

Likewise, a ‘modern way’ sometimes advocates suicide. In “pagan terms”, suicide is an inconsequential matter of freedom, except where consequentially “it involve[s] a breach of one’s duties to others”; but it is no crime against God. For Anti-Climacus, suicide is not despair as such. Rather, “one has to say that the fact that the pagan judged suicide in that way”—that is, as inconsequential—“was despair.”⁵⁷⁹ Thus with Augustine, pagan virtues are splendid vices.⁵⁸⁰

Kierkegaard takes no prisoners. When Hannay mildly says “it is possible to look at it the other way around”,⁵⁸¹ he is rightly observing that when we deal with Kierkegaard, mutually exclusive grounds are always at issue. In league, somehow, with Augustine, Kierkegaard promotes a kind of personal ‘Christian authenticity’ in each specific reader against the evasions and abstractions of an idealist Hegelianism and a complicit church. Thus the Sartrean reading is quite flawed in a number of directions, representing, oddly enough, an attempt to *moderate* Kierkegaard onto a ground lying somewhere between Hegelian rationalist idealism, and Christianity.

But this reading will not be dealt with directly here, since it reflects an internecine war among Kierkegaard scholars that we do well to avoid. Indeed, a proper reading of the late- and non-pseudonymous Christian works leaves Kierkegaard quite well enough fending for himself. A different choice is before us.

c) Psychology or theology?

Kierkegaard’s psychological efforts are as deeply interesting as his efforts at Christian edification, and it is taxing to decide which to pursue. The former do seem more directly germane, and do represent the bulk of his output. But the psychology is directly in the service of his edifying intent, which must come finally into view.

An interesting beginning will be to see the significance of ‘the subjective’, and the proper understanding of the subject-object relation, toward an appreciation that rationalist ‘objectivity’ is often a delusion. *Either-Or* follows as a kind of manifesto for his entire project. The diagnosis offered in that work is differently presented in *The Sickness Unto*

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., 77.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid., 76.

⁵⁸¹ See above, 195.

Death, to which faith is the solution in *Fear and Trembling* and *Practice*. We then approach *Works of Love* (albeit out of chronological order), which presents the subjectivity that constitutes faith.

Kierkegaard's psychological phenomenology, and his descriptions of strategies deployed by various people, occur within a realist objective order. The net effect is to endorse the main emphases we have seen in previous chapters. From this theological ground, Kierkegaard can challenge rationalist denigration of passion and subjectivity, and he can also challenge (proleptically) the Nietzschean alternative.

2. Subjectivity and passion

In this section, I will outline an objection by Kierkegaard to 'objectivity' that dictates his odd literary methods. 'Objective' thought obscures the embodied nature of human life. Human thought about humanity should more properly be 'subjective', thereby requiring respect for the passions. For Kierkegaard, 'passion' describes both our interests, and their defence and promotion. 'Passionlessness' reduces action, and passion should arise from Christian truth properly understood. Kierkegaard deploys a cluster of special writing strategies to reengage and redirect the passions, causing finite readers to wrestle with 'infinite' and 'absolute' concerns, and inviting readers to consider what is their own 'stage' of life in this wrestling.

Kierkegaard's idealistic, abstract attacks on idealism and abstraction can mask how his 'being' includes oft-overlooked earthy, momentary matters—bodily concerns and relationships and movements and transactions. (Nussbaum should approve.) A well-known demonstration of the point is this satirically idealist attack upon overblown idealist accounts of human being:

One must ... be very careful in dealing with a philosopher of the Hegelian school, and, above all, to make certain of the identity of the being with whom one has the honor to discourse. Is he a human being, an existing human being? Is he himself *sub specie aeterni*, even when he sleeps, eats, blows his nose, or whatever else a human being does? Is he himself the pure "I am I"? This is an idea that has surely never occurred to any philosopher; but if not, how does he stand existentially related to this entity, and through what intermediate determinations is the ethical responsibility resting upon him as an existing individual suitably respected? Does he in fact exist? And if he does, is he then not in process of becoming? And if he is in process of becoming, does he not face the future? And does he ever face the future by way of action? And if he never does, will he not forgive an ethical individuality for saying in passion and with dramatic truth, that he is an ass?⁵⁸²

⁵⁸² Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (1846), tr. David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941), 271.

For Kierkegaard, human subjects regularly lose a proper understanding of their relationship to the objects of their thought. Objectivity is often tortured to become the ‘sum total’ of life, without reference to whatever actually constitutes the humanity of each individual human. But while granting appropriate uses of ‘objective’ thought (whether in the sciences or theology), ethics and religion are not, in the final analysis, *about* this objectivity.

But attention to the world of the subjective brings a whole gamut of ‘feelingful’ terminology—‘fear and trembling’, ‘despair’, ‘anxiety’, ‘dread’, ‘erotic’, ‘delight’ (to name just a few). These elements of the self are traditionally considered philosophically messy; but Kierkegaard does not care. As Rudd puts it:

Fundamentally, what Kierkegaard is reminding us of is that we do not relate to the world primarily as detached rational observers, but as agents and as emotional beings. Hence Kierkegaard studies such moods as anxiety, irony, and despair as profoundly revelatory of the reality of human existence and of the nature of the world in which we live. Our emotions are not simply factors that tend to cloud or confuse the intellect; they are ways in which we relate to the world, and may be more reliable guides to it than the intellect at times. If I see someone in pain, feel compassion for him, and attempt to help, why should I not treat my feeling as revealing to me aspects of reality (his actual experience of pain and need; our common humanity; the ethical demand that is made on me) that would simply be missed or inadequately understood by a purely rational analysis of his physical or even psychological condition? In which case, why should it not be legitimate to speak about the truth of my emotion? The exclusively intellectualist interpretation of truth is a prejudice that has bedevilled religious, ethical, and aesthetic thinking. Kierkegaard’s teaching that ‘truth is subjectivity’ is a protest against that prejudice. ... Kierkegaard is not saying that there is no truth, it is all subjective; but, rather, what is revealed through subjectivity is truth, is the real nature of things.⁵⁸³

Subjectivity is indivisible from passion, which term Robert C. Roberts elucidates. (However, Roberts willingly acknowledges that Kierkegaard “is sometimes more concerned with rhetorical force than with balance and analytical precision.”⁵⁸⁴) When someone ‘has a passion for’ something, their ‘passions’ are the consistent, abiding loci of what is highly valued. This is passion as *interest*. Being ‘in a passion’ is the *defence or promotion* of these arenas of interest, in which sense passion is *emotion*. Instances of the latter logically require the former; the *interest* is the disposition to the *emotion*; and Kierkegaard employs ‘passion’ in both usages.⁵⁸⁵ Thus emotions, and in turn the interests they represent, are prior to deliberation over action *per se*. This is how and why the subjective is so weighty.

⁵⁸³ Anthony Rudd, *Kierkegaard and the Limits of the Ethical* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 66-67.

⁵⁸⁴ Robert C. Roberts, “Thinking Subjectively,” *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 11 no. 2 (1980): 91. Cf. Gouwens, 75-92 for an equally instructive investigation of emotion in Kierkegaard’s anthropology.

⁵⁸⁵ Robert C. Roberts, “Passion and Reflection,” in *Two Ages: International Kierkegaard Commentary*, vol. 14, ed. Robert L. Perkins, (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 88-89.

But at some times and in some places, emotions are not held to be important in this way. Kierkegaard indicts 1840's Copenhagen as such a place. (Roberts believes this charge can be put not only to Copenhagen but to humanity in general.⁵⁸⁶) At such times and in such places, deliberation ('reflection') proceeds in a manner that brings about individual, and societal, *passionlessness*. In an ever deadening loop, this creates more reflection, less passion, and less meaningful action. **With** passion, deliberation is a necessary step *toward* action; but **without** passion, deliberative reflection serves only to *excuse* action.⁵⁸⁷

Kierkegaard's lifelong goal, as a 'poet in the service of Christianity', was to combat the diseases of over-reflection, passionlessness and abused objectivity, toward truly Christian 'passion':

[S]pirituality of the sort that Kierkegaard discusses and seeks to engender through his writing is essentially thought-determined, essentially conceptual, essentially reflective. And this reflection is essentially related to passion in both of the senses we have determined: Passion as interest is thought-determined in that one must have some conception of what one is interested in, if one is to have a passion; and passion as emotion is thought-determined in that any emotional assessment that the subject makes of his situation must be in some terms or other.⁵⁸⁸

It is fairly clear, then, that Kierkegaard would ardently endorse that sense of 'the logic of love' where logic is inescapably imbued with love. A debate is to be had, perhaps, about this 'inescapable', since it might be argued that the deadened, objective positions he opposed have enacted exactly such an 'escape'. But this need not concern us, because the major point stands: for Kierkegaard, all 'logic' *should* be imbued with love. Useless deliberative logic is not, and useful deliberative logic is.

We shall return, after looking at *Either-Or*, to the culmination of proper passion that Kierkegaard envisages in Christianity. For the moment, this interest in subjectivity and passion makes clearer Kierkegaard's strange literary methods. In the nature of this case, didacticism will not do: it will not engender passion, only more reflection. Kierkegaard's 'indirect communication' was to elicit responses from readers;⁵⁸⁹ and for Roberts, three main writing strategies subject readers to a kind of *process* by which they might be changed.⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid., 102, 106.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid., 92-98.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid., 91. Original text concludes "... of other"; however Prof. Roberts confirms the correction as quoted (email 19th February 2000).

⁵⁸⁹ Gouwens, 1-2.

⁵⁹⁰ Roberts, "Passion," 103-06.

- By *intellectual seduction*, readers eventually unpack a satirical ‘dialectical knot’. Its earnest message is thereby impressed upon them more effectively than if they were simply told the earnest message. (However, this strategy can work only upon intellectuals.)
- There is *impassioned psychological analysis*, where the passions of the writer actually ‘infect’ the reader, and the reader is forced to uncover and confront his own passion (or lack of it).
- There is *poetically varied reflection*, where a small handful of truths are repeated in a multiplicity of ways, forcing themselves into the reader’s consciousness by sheer repetition—and due to the inordinate amount of *time* that readers are forced to spend reading them.

All the characters of Kierkegaard’s pseudonymous “marionette theatre”⁵⁹¹ are used to interdict or exculpate various psychological states along much broader lines than mere psychological description, and variously to argue for the new, subjective view.

Most men are subjective toward themselves and objective toward all others, frighteningly objective sometimes—but the task is precisely to be objective towards oneself and subjective toward all others.⁵⁹²

People must seriously and properly wrestle with ‘infinite’ and ‘absolute’ concerns, whilst remaining conscious of their concrete finitude. Such ‘wrestling’ ranges from attentiveness to the gravity of *each choice* (with the attendant truth that ‘non-choice’ and ‘choice deferred’ are actually versions of choosing); through to the enormity of the ‘absolute’ claim that comes upon one from the ‘infinite’ Christian God. The pseudonyms adumbrate aspects of this, although Kierkegaard exhibits a fondness for idealism and dialectic, probably in response to and in unconscious reflection of the Hegelian milieu. Kierkegaard uses the pseudonyms to explore the various strategies that subjective selves employ as they seek to locate themselves between the ambiguities of their emotion and whatever they might objectively know.

Thus follow the famous ‘stages’ of life, where each stage represents just such a strategy. The ‘aesthete’ essentially celebrates the abandonment of himself⁵⁹³ to subjective unruliness. Subjugating this, the bourgeois ‘ethical’ person smugly adopts local convention.

⁵⁹¹ The term is from Thomas H. Croxall, *Kierkegaard Commentary* (London: James Nisbet & Co. Ltd., 1956), 254.

⁵⁹² Kierkegaard, cited in Gouwens, 31, n.11 (from *Journals and Papers*).

⁵⁹³ Aesthetes are consistently pictured as males, and here as elsewhere in Kierkegaard’s thought, it seems unwise to substitute gender-inclusive pronouns.

‘Religiousness A’ follows, who is essentially ‘ethical’ but with religious sentiments—or who is the ‘olympic athlete’ of the ethical, having attained the highest form of ethical commitment humanly possible (such as a ‘purity of heart’ that is ‘the will to do one thing’). Finally, ‘religiousness B’ is so profoundly converted to ‘absolute’ and ‘infinite’ concerns that ‘finite’ matters exert little leverage.

The ‘passionate’ nature of this literature means more than ever that nothing can substitute for direct engagement with it (and that the reflections that follow shall necessarily be somewhat subjective!)

3. *Either-Or*

I will examine *Either-Or* in this section, showing how it develops a ‘stand-off’ between an aesthete (also known as ‘A’) and a judge (also known as ‘B’, ‘Judge William’ or ‘the Judge’). The aesthete proclaims frivolous abandon against boredom, but his credo merely seems horrible when the amoral aimlessness of an aesthetic ‘seducer’, Johannes, comes to light. Judge William prises open such unliveable aspects of the aesthetic position, commending a life of responsible choice-making as the more meaningful. But the Judge seems too boring for the aesthete, hence there is a stand-off. *Either-Or* goes on to suggest that Christianity can retain the best of both the aesthete and the Judge, and this conclusion heralds Kierkegaard’s wider project.

The two-volume epic *Either-Or*, the first of Kierkegaard’s works for a general public, is presented as a debate between a judge and an aesthete in a highly crafted, Russian doll-like series of texts ‘by’ various pseudonyms. The stolid essays of Judge William and the various genre-defying papers of the aesthete are edited by one Victor Eremita. In turn, A’s paper’s include writings from ‘Johannes’ and ‘Cordelia’ in *The Seducer’s Diary*. Victor’s title reflects a polarity:

A’s papers contain a multiplicity of approaches to an aesthetic view of life. A coherent aesthetic view of life can hardly be presented. B’s papers contain an ethical view of life. ... The title I have chosen expresses precisely this.⁵⁹⁴

A cryptic quotation on the frontispiece might, by analogy with the quotation at the start of the Judge’s papers, represent the clarion call of the aesthete: “‘Is reason then alone baptised, are the passions pagans?’”⁵⁹⁵ But as we shall see, this may gesture toward the synthesis of A’s thesis with B’s antithesis.

⁵⁹⁴ Søren Kierkegaard, *Either-Or (Part I)* (1843), tr. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, *Kierkegaard’s Writings*, vol. III (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 13.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

a) *A is for Aesthete*

Kierkegaard uses 'A' and Johannes to approach important ethical concepts, such as the wider moral order, the folly of radical moral subjectivity, the loneliness of personal sin, the problem of lost *telos*, and the cruelty of disordered affection. These themes are evident in respective discussions of 'tragedy', despair, boredom, and seduction.

A's opening *Diapsalmata* are a series of aesthetic 'proverbs'. The aesthete's emotional reactions and emotion-coloured thoughts become the central object of his attention, his primary source of entertainment, and the only 'category' by which to grasp his world.⁵⁹⁶ But this inner world is played out against a backdrop of futility. There is no 'meaning' to be had even in his grander passions, and the absence of any ordering principle causes him to seem inconsequential and languid.⁵⁹⁷ These jottings from life prefigure themes of tragedy, despair boredom, and seduction⁵⁹⁸ in the essays that follow.

A's foray into dramatic tragedy describes *the wider ordering necessary* to make tragedy emotionally 'enjoyable'. If tragedy is to remain "infinitely gentle" and "a motherly love that lulls the troubled one",⁵⁹⁹ the tragic hero must in some sense be caught by fate (our 'moral luck'). When dramatic tragedy makes its hero "Pelagian", he only has himself to blame, and his pure 'ethical' guilt is not interesting; but the tragic hero is *ambiguously* guiltless (thus aesthetically interesting). "It is, therefore, surely a misunderstanding of the tragic when our age endeavours to have everything fateful transubstantiate itself into individuality and subjectivity".⁶⁰⁰ A similar point is made when A opposes a 'self-creation' reminiscent of the Nietzschean project:

One would think that the generation in which I have the honor of living must be a kingdom of gods. But this is by no means so; the vigor, the courage, that wants to be the creator of its own good fortune in this way, indeed, its own creator, is an illusion, and when the age loses the tragic, it gains despair. In the tragic there is implicit a sadness and a healing that one indeed must not disdain, and when someone wishes to gain himself in the superhuman way our age tries to do it, he loses himself and becomes comic. Every individual, however original he is, is still a child of God, of his age, of his nation, of his family, of his friends, and only in them does he have his truth. If he wants to be the absolute in all this, his relativity, then he becomes ludicrous.⁶⁰¹

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid. 20 (§5); 21 (§§4, 6); 23 (§2). (These paragraph numbers are counted from the first full paragraph at the top of each page in the Hong edition.)

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid. 20 (§1); 22 (§3); 23 (§4 ll. 1-4); 24 (§§1, 4); 26 (§5); 28 (§4); 36 (§§2-3).

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid. 24 (§3); 25 (§3); 42 (§3); and perhaps 29 (§4).

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid., 145.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid., 144.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., 145.

“But if he surrenders this claim, is willing to be relative, then he *eo ipso* has the tragic”.⁶⁰² Of course A only asserts an objective order to secure the pleasantness of tragedy. His defence of the tragic is insubstantial; we later begin to suspect that he will deploy any argument to defend whatever mood takes him. But it remains intriguing that even Kierkegaard’s A is no Nietzschean. Even A, for the sake of his emotional well-being, can stumble into declamations of a wider order and against self-creation.

Three essays are addressed to the Συμπαρανεκρῶμενοι (‘Fellowship of the Dead’), a society that eulogises self-destructive, self-indulgent hopelessness. In *Sickness Unto Death*, despair will be declaimed as ‘sin’. This is the hermeneutical ‘key’ to these strange essays. The ‘solidarity’ of original sin is abused if taken to represent a ‘fellowship’ in the manner of the Συμπαρανεκρῶμενοι, and the Συμπαρανεκρῶμενοι instantiates precisely the error with which the later book is concerned.⁶⁰³

[S]in, however common to all, does not gather men together into a ... partnership (“no more than out in the graveyard [*Kierkegaarden*] the multitude of the dead form a society”), but splits people up into individuals and fastens hold of every individual as a sinner ...⁶⁰⁴

Aesthetes can celebrate despair, but not boredom; and *Rotation of Crops* is a witty, almost credal statement against boredom. Just as Aristophane’s two characters Chremylos and Karion had ‘too much of everything’—love, rolls, the arts, sweets, honour, cakes, bravery, dried figs, fame, scrambled eggs, authority, and vegetables—so also boredom “advances” and “is the root of all evil”.⁶⁰⁵ The history of civilisation consists in humanity’s march *against* boredom. Therefore “a theory of social prudence” dictates that for a society to prosper, boredom must be banished. Society must cycle through as many diversions as possible (like a farmer’s rotation of crops).

The general populace engages in ‘rotation’ simply by switching one boredom for the next, even including space travel.⁶⁰⁶ But their ‘rotation’ forgets that boredom inheres within each ‘crop’ even before it is chosen. The aesthete’s ‘rotation’ is more refined. He adopts a stand-offish suspicion and ‘recollection’ of each activity as it proceeds, both engaging in it and being amused by it. The method “assure[s] complete suspension” and “prevents a person

⁶⁰² Ibid.

⁶⁰³ Intertextuality like this forms the best evidence, if it be needed, that *Either-Or* is a prolegomena for the rest of Kierkegaard’s work.

⁶⁰⁴ Kierkegaard, *Sickness*, 153, citing himself.

⁶⁰⁵ Kierkegaard, *Either-Or I*, 286 & passim.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., 291.

foundering in any particular relationship in life”.⁶⁰⁷ Of course this method requires him to forswear friendships, marriage, and official posts; and the Judge’s challenge will be on exactly this basis—the aesthete has neither consistency nor history. He has no *telos*, and without a *telos*, the generic order of the moral field becomes unintelligible, causing ethical dysfunction, despair, and boredom.⁶⁰⁸

Even so, the humour of Aristophane’s list derives precisely from the scrambling of generic order; and it has to be said that A’s case is remarkably persuasive! All serious arguments against it are certain to fail, by being boring; and the brazen self-centredness on view is deflected by the wonderful hilarity of the project. In a sense all eyes are now on the aesthete, for his ‘rotation method’ stands or falls only by reference to the course of his life. Given his method, ‘the course of his life’ is precisely *unavailable*, either to him or us.

But A is upset when the course of another such life does ‘become’ available, in the ‘diary’ of Johannes, the seducer. A’s previous manic appreciation of ‘first love’ is fundamental to his views against marriage. But Johannes’ vampirism, seen in his addiction to ‘first love’, leaves A professing to be appalled. The diary is both A’s mirror and diviner, and A is suddenly unsure of himself.

“The moment is everything,”⁶⁰⁹ ponders Johannes. In his grand strategy against Cordelia, an engagement is necessary; but

The banefulness of an engagement is always the ethical in it. The ethical is just as boring in scholarship as in life. What a difference! Under the aesthetic sky, everything is buoyant, beautiful, transient; when ethics arrives on the scene, everything becomes harsh, angular, infinitely *langweiligt* [boring].⁶¹⁰

“The ethical is rigorous and hard”,⁶¹¹ A has already declared; and like A, Johannes feeds upon emotions (“this state, this obscure and indefinite but nevertheless powerful emotion, also has its sweetness”⁶¹²), and feeds off them in Cordelia (“I would love to know the state of her feelings.”⁶¹³) The sharp prose of the *Seducer’s Diary* could be quoted at length; but in sum, it is a rank doppelgänger of A’s sparkling flamboyancy.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid., 295.

⁶⁰⁸ Cf. O’Donovan, *Resurrection*, ch. 2.

⁶⁰⁹ Kierkegaard, *Either-Or I*, 433.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid., 367.

⁶¹¹ Ibid., 145.

⁶¹² Ibid., 325.

⁶¹³ Ibid., 344.

My eyes can never grow weary of quickly passing over ... these radiating emanations of womanly beauty. ... Each one has her own: the cheerful smile, the roguish glance, the yearning eye, the tilted head, the frolicsome disposition, the quiet sadness, the profound presentiment, the ominous depression, the earthly homesickness, the unshriven emotions, the beckoning brow, the questioning lips, the secretive forehead, the alluring curls, the concealing eyelashes, the heavenly pride, the earthly modesty, the angelic purity, the secret blush, the light step, the lovely buoyancy, the languorous posture, the longing dreaminess, the unaccountable sighing, the slender figure, the soft curves, the opulent bosom, the curving hips, the tiny feet, the elegant hands.⁶¹⁴

If we were discomforted by Chremylos and Karion's construal of honour alongside dried figs, then Johannes' ranking of "opulent bosom" and "alluring curls" alongside "quiet sadness" and "ominous depression" invites us to call him evil and a monster. ("I can always make use of a mood, and [Cordelia's] beautiful longing has really stirred me."⁶¹⁵) The clever credo of 'A' in *Rotation of Crops*, when seen lived out in Johannes, is merely horrible. Even A sees how Cordelia's present and Johannes' future represent *ahistorical* personal histories. In such ahistoric histories, 'moods' are the stuff of a lifelong series of aesthetic 'moments' and the 'ethical' must of necessity be rejected. Only Cordelia's "witch's dance" of self-reproach,⁶¹⁶ and Johannes' "sterile restlessness",⁶¹⁷ can remain.

b) B is for Bore

A has stated his case, but in living it, Johannes shows how emotions and aesthetics require governance by prior ethical commitments and a life-direction. The Judge has been handed the highest of moral ground from which to reply.

The titles of his two long treatises, *Aesthetic Validity of Marriage* and *Balance between the Aesthetic and the Ethical*, straightforwardly speak for themselves. William seeks to convince A that ethics offers the best of the aesthetic, and more. There are certainly different emphases in the two treatises, but a summary of William's overall strategies will suffice. His withering attacks upon A are regular and extreme, though affectionate. No disadvantage in A's position is omitted, and if Johannes' deficiencies were unclear in any way, William will relentlessly meet the lack.⁶¹⁸

⁶¹⁴ Ibid., 428-29.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid., 384.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid., 307.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid., 309.

⁶¹⁸ The attacks repeatedly list the deficiencies, but to quote them all here is too much. For examples, see Søren Kierkegaard, *Either-Or (Part II)* (1843), tr. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, *Kierkegaard's Writings*, vol. IV (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987) 17; 49; 140; 147; 160-61; 165-66; 197-98; 203-07 (presaging *Sickness Unto Death?*); & 326.

In his strongest attack, William recounts the story of Myson the misanthrope, who laughed when alone because he was alone.⁶¹⁹ William ironically acknowledges A as Myson's successor. He then moves to other matters—friendship, A's favourite playwright, ethical theory. Then suddenly, an ambush:

I do have just one question to ask you ... For once answer me very honestly and without beating around the bush: Do you really laugh when you are alone? ... If you do not, then I have won.⁶²⁰

As the *Diapsalmata* have already told us, this aesthete does *not* laugh when alone. Throughout, the Judge is severe toward A's melancholia, which he believes to be a phenomenon of aesthetic self-indulgence.⁶²¹

But if the Judge's critique is strong, his solutions amount to less. His key themes are that duty is valuable, and need not be seen in a sour Kantian light;⁶²² that one's choices are a key definer of the self and bring with them the offer of a personal history;⁶²³ and that one's vocational calling, marriage relationship and accomplishments all bring personal meaning. On this view, "the aesthetic in a person is that by which he spontaneously and immediately is what he is; the ethical is that by which he becomes what he becomes."⁶²⁴ And little is lost, for the ethical brings a host of aesthetic goods, such as delight, beauty, and friendship.⁶²⁵ Here is a finale of sorts for the Judge's arguments:

What I wanted to do was to show how the ethical ... is so far from depriving life of its beauty that it expressly gives it beauty. It gives life peace, safety, and security, because it continually calls out to us: *Quod petis, hic est* [What you are seeking is here]. It rescues from any fanaticism that would exhaust the soul and gives it health and strength. It teaches us not to overrate the accidental or to idolize good fortune. It teaches us to be happy over good fortune, and ... it teaches us to be happy in misfortune.⁶²⁶

However, this does sound a little 'thin'. A discussion of beauty, for example, seeks to counter the charge that "the ethical view deprives us of any beauty";⁶²⁷ but William only argues a psychological *fait accompli*, as if simply to say 'I find beauty, therefore *you* can too'. While true for the Judge, we remain unclear how it might apply for others, other than

⁶¹⁹ Ibid., 320-31.

⁶²⁰ Ibid., 326.

⁶²¹ Ibid., 25, 185, 189-90.

⁶²² Ibid., 59; 149; 153; 254-55.

⁶²³ Ibid., 167-68, 213-16; 230; 240-54 esp. 250-51; & 262. These choices can even banish moods (230).

⁶²⁴ Ibid., 178; cf. 225 & 253. Cf. also the argument that marriage 'historicises' first love (139).

⁶²⁵ Ibid., 297; 277f & 323; & 321-22 (respectively).

⁶²⁶ Ibid., 323.

⁶²⁷ Ibid., 277.

through their radical free choice. And it becomes pungently clear how far William is from denying the charge of boredom:

[P]ull yourself together, stifle every rebellious thought that would have the audacity to commit high treason against your better nature, disdain all the paltriness that would envy your intellectual gifts and desire them for itself to put them to even worse use; disdain the hypocritical virtue that is unwilling to carry the burden of life and yet wants to be eulogized for carrying it; but do not therefore disdain life, respect every decent effort, every modest activity that humbly conceals itself, and above all have a little more respect for woman.⁶²⁸

When we consider the charge of boredom alongside the nearly four-hundred pages of page-length paragraphs of similar tone and style, it is hard to see how A might be convinced. Indeed, it is hard to imagine what could have induced him to read the Judge's great effort.

c) *Both-And*

Victor Eremita is certainly correct to signal that neither A nor William win the engagement;⁶²⁹ but the problem is more of mutual destruction than stalemate. For whatever else is said, William *is* boring and A does *not* laugh when he is alone. Whatever else comes out of *Either-Or*, this result is an intractable truth against each position. Rudd's account of the 'stalemate' is instructive:

For the aesthete, in his individualism and his scepticism about the possibility of finding real fulfilment in the rather complacent conventionalism of Judge William, has some conception of real and important values that are beyond the Judge's ken. For Kierkegaard, individuality and self-formative commitment to projects can only be held together at the religious level. The aesthete neglects the latter, and his soul is dissipated in multiplicity. The ethical neglects the former, and he vanishes into the mass of the conventionally respectable. Only the religious man can combine the two in his life.⁶³⁰

The frontispiece of *Either-Or* includes the cryptic "Is reason then alone baptized, are the passions pagan?" While this is most naturally taken as a 'mission statement' for A⁶³¹ (just as there is a corresponding motto at the start of the second volume for B), Michael Banner wonders if it points forward to suggest that *both* the case of the aesthete and the judge are found to be wanting, and that the concerns of both can only be resolved by the 'religious'.⁶³² This may at first seem tenuous; after all, it *is* most naturally A's 'mission statement'. But

⁶²⁸ Ibid., 207.

⁶²⁹ Kierkegaard, *Either-Or I*, 14.

⁶³⁰ Rudd, 121-22.

⁶³¹ So e.g. Croxall, 39.

⁶³² Michael Banner, "Sexualität II," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, vol. XXXI (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000). 205 II. 52-57.

given Kierkegaard's devious pseudonymity, it is certainly plausible for this to be the last 'Russian doll'—Kierkegaard's final joke, as it were, upon both protagonists.

The claim hardly stands or falls just by divining the 'correct' hermeneutic for the frontispiece, since the Judge's gesture toward some further resolution within the 'religious' is fulfilled in the Jylland pastor's *Ultimatum*. The piece is a dialectical and existential version of justification by grace through faith, but oddly half-put, as it were. Of greater oddity is William's commendation of the pastor as "having grasped what I have said and what I would like to have said", "expressed ... better than I am able to."⁶³³ In fact we suspect the Judge *not* to have grasped what the pastor has said, not at all:

[Pastor:] [D]id not a terrible anxiety seize you when the thought could momentarily arise in your soul that you could be in the right ... Therefore this, that in relation to God you are always in the wrong, is not a truth you must acknowledge, not a consolation that alleviates your pain, not a compensation for something better, but it is a joy in which you win a victory over yourself and over the world, your delight, your song of praise, your adoration, a demonstration that your love is happy, as only that love can be with which one loves God.⁶³⁴

If Banner is right to suspect the Judge of self-satisfaction concerning his marriage,⁶³⁵ so also might we suspect of the Judge in his response to the Jylland pastor. If against the aesthete is held the need for wider ethical commitments, then against the ethical person is held the need for a certain kind of divine 'absolute'. The ethical person forgets that the moral good is not a finite entity to be fully grasped and held complete. If the Jylland Pastor's message is integrative in this way, Roberts shows how:

Being a person at all requires that one have emotions and what kind of person one is is determined by which emotions are central or integrative for an individual. Directly and indirectly in his writings Kierkegaard develops a 'psychology' in which it holds that an individual has not become fully a person until his concerns have been integrated by peculiarly ethical and religious cares. This means that the person's *central* emotions, the ones he could not give up without psychologically losing his identity, are such ones as the desire to do right by his neighbor, to please God, to have motives which are untainted with counter-moral motives, and so on.⁶³⁶

Against *this* claim, Kierkegaard's dismissal of objectivity becomes all the clearer:

[O]bjectivity is precisely the tendency to turn away psychologically from these concerns, by turning away from the self-implicating use of ethical and religious concepts which is necessary if these concerns are to be exercised and fostered. To anyone who accepts Kierkegaard's psychology, then, objectivity is a disease, and indeed a deadly one. To become objective is to

⁶³³ Kierkegaard, *Either-Or II*, 338.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid.*, 351.

⁶³⁵ Banner, 205 l. 39.

⁶³⁶ Roberts, "Thinking," 90.

lose one's self; it is to shrivel and die at the very core of one's being as a person.⁶³⁷

(For Rudd, Kierkegaard "is certainly a Hegelian"—not formally but materially, insofar as these *are* stages that are to be lived through rather than contemplated dispassionately.⁶³⁸ But the Jylland Pastor's 'both-and' is also non-Hegelian, obviously enough: it concerns individual responsibility; the infinite is no world-spirit; and there is no addendum to faith. Of course Kierkegaard often 'looks' Hegelian, but we need not be overly concerned with debate about this.)

Either-Or displays a powerful *inclusio* formed by the frontispiece and the Jylland pastor, and heralds Kierkegaard's subsequent corpus. The subjectivity of the aesthete and the Judge's ethical commitments matter. Properly understood, Christianity gives both.

4. 'Christian emotion'

How then is this synthesis, this 'baptising' of the ethicist's reason and the aesthete's passion, achieved in the 'true Christian'? In this section I will consider a set of 'Christian emotions' that Kierkegaard understands to form Christian consciousness. These emotions start with 'despair' and traverse 'faith' to incorporate 'love, 'joy' and 'gladness', albeit with some space for more negative social engagements. But in anticipation of my next chapter, I will suggest that Kierkegaard's conclusions as to what constitutes Christian emotion do not match those of the NT writers. He offers a prolegomena, as it were, to a Christian account of affective deliberative logic.

a) *The objective basis of Christian emotion*

Kierkegaard's program for a properly passionate subjectivity is all the more spectacularly true for Christianity. The absolutes of Christianity make it disturbing to approach at all ('fear and trembling'), but the right kind of grasp of its central message gives a passion (as interest) that relativises all other concerns. Orthodox Christian dogmas are not disputed by Kierkegaard; his point is that they *must* "shape Christian emotion":⁶³⁹

Upon [the] common basis of more universal emotion the qualitative difference must be erected and make itself felt, for the more universal emotion has reference only to something abstract: to be moved by something higher, something eternal, by an idea. And one does not become a Christian by being moved by something indefinitely higher, and not every outpouring of religious emotion is a Christian outpouring. That is to say: emotion which is Christian is checked by the definition of concepts.⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

⁶³⁸ Rudd, 22.

⁶³⁹ Kierkegaard, *On Authority and Revelation*; cited in Gouwens, 53.

⁶⁴⁰ Kierkegaard, *On Authority and Revelation*; cited in Roberts, "Passion," 91.

There is, then, a properly objective element to the dogmatic basis of Christianity; not just any emotion will do. The subjective point, though, is finally that Christian *action* be altered:

[T]he basic confusion in Christianity has been to make it a doctrine. With a doctrine one has to take care first to master it all. Just the opposite with the N.T.; it has solely to do with the ethical, and wants you simply to begin, therefore, with some particular ...⁶⁴¹

Christianity, as it is in the New Testament, focuses on man's will; everything turns on that, on transforming the will; all the phrases (renounce the world, deny one's self, die from the world, etc.; similarly, hate oneself, love God, etc.), everything relates to this fundamental idea in Christianity, what makes it what it is: transformation of the will.⁶⁴²

The same passage goes on to decry the translation of Christianity into a matter of intellectuality—which makes the theologian a favourite target. In the following invective, 'Strandvej' is the coastal road running north from Copenhagen, the main route to Bakken, and passing through Dyrehaven, a large wood with many deer. A big amusement park at Bakken would be the destination on a Sunday:

To me the learned theological world seems like the Strandvej on a Sunday afternoon in the season when everybody goes to Bakken in Dyrehaven: they tear past each other, yell and scream, laugh and make fun of each other, drive their horses to death, overturn, and are run over. Finally, when they reach Bakken covered with dust and out of breath—well, they look at each other—and go home.⁶⁴³

That is, they have no idea of how, finally, to enjoy the park. Enjoyment of the park is constituted by a complex of (we might say) 'obedience' and attachment to Jesus. The contrast between Christ and Socrates in *Philosophical Fragments* highlights a particular 'qualitative disjunction' in Christianity. If a disciple of Christ ceases his *attachment* to Jesus (in the way that a disciple of Socrates must), then for that person, Jesus' core message is necessarily annulled. Therefore passions and emotions are not *only* 'checked' by 'concepts' about Jesus: "For these are not just views; they are *life* views—concept clusters whose logic is such that if their user's emotions and passions are not shaped by them, the concepts are violated even if they are impeccably clearly thought".⁶⁴⁴

b) Some examples of Christian emotion

I will now elucidate four kinds of Christian emotion, which Kierkegaard thought to result from the shaping of emotion and passion by the 'concept clusters' of Christianity. I will also

⁶⁴¹ Søren Kierkegaard, *Papers and Journals: A Selection* tr. Alastair Hannay, *Penguin Classics* edition, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1996), 497 (50 x 3 A 169).

⁶⁴² *Ibid.*, 618 (54 xi 2 A 86). My thanks to Brian Brock for drawing these quotations to my attention.

⁶⁴³ Kierkegaard, *Letters*, Letter 3; in Kierkegaard, *Either-Or I*, 458.

⁶⁴⁴ Roberts, "Passion," 101-2.

suggest that Kierkegaard's version of 'Christian emotion' falls seriously short of the NT's account of the matter.

(i) Despair

The journey to obedient attachment to Jesus, foreshadowed in *Either-Or*, is opened up in a series of works where the 'communication' is increasingly 'direct'. The multi-layered analysis of despair in *Sickness Unto Death* could do with closer scrutiny than we can afford, but it may suffice to note how both aesthete and judge are seen to be in despair.

[T]he only life wasted is the life of one who so lived it, deceived by life's pleasures or its sorrows, that he never became decisively, eternally, conscious of himself as spirit, as self [nor] that there is a God there and that 'he', himself, his self, exists before this God, which infinite gain is never come by except through despair.⁶⁴⁵

We might wonder if this insight is somewhat akin to St Paul's:

[G]odly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death. (2 Cor. 7:10, *NRSV*)

ἡ γὰρ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη μετάνοιαν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἀμεταμέλητον ἐργάζεται· ἡ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται. (2 Cor. 7:10, *NA26*)

For Kierkegaard, as for St Paul, despair (like 'grief', λύπη) is somehow either just a disease, or a propellant towards a cure. One of many forms of diseased despair is the 'fantastic', where someone is caught frivolously amongst the 'infinite'.

But to become fantastic ... and therefore to be in despair ... does not mean that a person may not continue living a fairly good life, to all appearances be someone, employed with temporal matters, get married, beget children, be honoured and esteemed—and one may fail to notice that in a deeper sense he lacks a self. Such things cause little stir in the world ... The bigger danger, that of losing oneself, can pass off in the world as quietly as if it were nothing; every other loss, an arm, a leg, five dollars, a wife, etc. is bound to be noticed.⁶⁴⁶

Both the judge and the aesthete have lost themselves, for in the language of *Sickness Unto Death*, they do not relate 'themselves' rightly to the proper "synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity"⁶⁴⁷ that constitutes true humanity. Christian teaching comes against this despair and names it as sin—"not as something that can be comprehended, but as a paradox which has to be believed."⁶⁴⁸ Language such as this opens Kierkegaard to charges of irrationalism and existentialism, but that simply misreads the force of the dialectic. Subjectivity is such that a mere argument

⁶⁴⁵ Kierkegaard, *Sickness*, 57.

⁶⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 62-63.

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 130.

will not convey someone from this 'despair' to the regard of it as sin. To name despair as sin represents an insertion from a different ground, which is of course why the naming is, in NT terms, so easily experienced as the 'offence' that Christ repeatedly urges his hearers not to take.⁶⁴⁹ To be oneself is to cross over to this alternative ground, where despair is named as sin, properly relating the "synthesis of the infinite and the finite",⁶⁵⁰ so that finally, "the self [is] grounded transparently in the power which established it. [This] is the definition of faith."⁶⁵¹

But is 'despair' rightly to be regarded as a *Christian* emotion? Were Kierkegaard to follow the logic of St Paul, despair is 'pre-Christian'. As an account of Christian emotion, we await more.

(ii) Faith

Faith may not itself be an 'emotion'. If Christianity is regarded as a "response" to a Christian "news-narrative",⁶⁵² then there are enough cognitive elements at work in 'faith' to suggest that it is more than an emotion. (The suggestion that faith is more than an emotion is made in full awareness that so far, I have conceded a generously cognitive element to emotion.) Nevertheless, it is useful to list faith here among Kierkegaard's Christian emotions, since Kierkegaard is very interested in a range of emotional components he believes to be integral to faith. The range extends from a certain 'fear and trembling' to the serene joy of a so-called 'knight of faith'. This range assists us to see how faith bridges the gap between the despair we have seen and the love we will go on to examine.

"Looked at from any other point of view Christianity is and must be a sort of madness or the greatest horror. Only through the consciousness of sin is there entrance to it".⁶⁵³ If such a comment effectively reiterates Kierkegaard's views on despair, then *Fear and Trembling* concerns the faith resultant upon this consciousness. The heavy sarcasm toward Hegelian intellectualism (which 'goes further') is contrasted to Paul, who trembles in a confidence that is not Hegelian:

Today nobody will stop at faith; they all go further. It would perhaps be rash to inquire where to, but surely a mark of urbanity and good breeding on my part to assume that in fact everyone does indeed have faith, otherwise it would be odd to talk of going further. In those old days it was different. For then faith was a task for a whole lifetime, not a skill thought to be acquired in

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid., 161-65.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid., 43.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid., 165.

⁶⁵² Roberts, "Emotions Among the Virtues," 42. See below, p. 241, for a fuller quotation of Roberts.

⁶⁵³ Kierkegaard, *Practice*, 71.

days or weeks. When the old campaigner approached the end, had fought the good fight, and kept his faith, his heart was still young enough not to have forgotten the fear and trembling that disciplined his youth and which, although the grown man mastered it, no man altogether outgrows—unless he somehow manages at the earliest possible opportunity to go further. When these venerable figures arrived our own age begins, in order to go further.⁶⁵⁴

It is no accident that an attack on Hegelian ‘faith’ is entitled *Fear and Trembling*, and it is a mistake to forget the title’s reference to the most profoundly unpleasant form of emotion. *Fear and Trembling* highlights the inadequacy of the ‘ethical’ to make Abraham intelligible; but in seeing this, we might overlook how ‘fear and trembling’ is precisely that which is generated by the requirement upon Abraham to reject (‘teleologically suspend’) the ethical, and that the ethical presents itself to Abraham as ‘temptation’ precisely in its offer to alleviate Abraham’s ‘fear and trembling’.

The title’s appropriation of the phrase from Philippians 2:12 recalls the apostle’s most paranaetic (therefore ‘ethical’) epistle, and professedly Christian readers are reminded that they stand under its aegis, not under some metaethical ‘going beyond’, which is actually a pathetic falling-short. Its use in reference to Abraham also recalls him as ‘the father of all who believe’.⁶⁵⁵ Thus the title cunningly checkmates any professed Christian reading in abstraction, claiming against them that authentic religious life is Abrahamic and Pauline. That the phrase is taken from Philippians 2:12 serves also to recall the strangely reassuring Philippians 2:13 (“it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure”). Therefore all who ‘fear and tremble’ may yet complete the “good fight” (Kierkegaard’s evocation of 2 Tim. 4:7) by divine assistance. Against this, the conventionally ethical is a lame substitute. This was the point of the Jylland pastor’s strange sermon.

Gouwens reminds us of Johannes *de silentio*’s intention so to immerse us in this text that we imaginatively engage in Abraham’s trek, feeling with Abraham his “dialectical dilemma and his consequent terror: that God calls him to sacrifice the child of promise. Imagining that terror includes even more: placing oneself on such a trek.” This is a kind of reading that shapes “the reader’s beliefs, emotions, judgments, policies and affections.”⁶⁵⁶

To place readers alongside Abraham in this way is similar to the “contemporaneousness with Christ” that Kierkegaard commends in *Practice*. Kierkegaard introduces us to this

⁶⁵⁴ Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling* (1843), tr. Alastair Hannay, *Penguin Classics* edition, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), 42-3.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 51; cf. Rom. 4:11 & Gal. 3:6-9,14.

⁶⁵⁶ Gouwens, 23.

‘contemporaneousness’ in an unnerving way, by surveying all the ‘human’ ways that Christ could have been, or was, dismissed by his contemporaries. But Christ’s “come hither” both confronts all of these human objections, and acts to erase the two millennia intervening since the call was first issued.⁶⁵⁷ Christ thus invites people to join *alongside* him in a suffering that could easily be avoided. This suffering is

an even greater torment and misery and pain than the greatest human torment, and hence also a crime in the eyes of one’s neighbours. And so it will always prove when becoming a Christian in truth comes to mean to become contemporary with Christ. ... For in relation to the Absolute there is only one tense: the present.⁶⁵⁸

Again, there follows here the language of fear and trembling, and of the possibility of offence at the claims of the lowly Jesus. But once this is navigated (in “[c]andour before God”⁶⁵⁹), there is a surprising result:

And what does all this mean? It means that everyone for himself, in quiet inwardness before God, shall humble himself before what it means in the strictest sense to be a Christian, admit candidly before God how it stands with him, so that he might yet accept the grace which is offered to everyone who is imperfect, that is, to everyone. And then no further; then for the rest let him attend to his work, be glad in it, love his wife, be glad in her, bring up his children with joyfulness, love his fellow men, rejoice in life.⁶⁶⁰

Faith, then, is at once about ‘fear and trembling’, yet is also about ‘gladness’, ‘joy’ and ‘love’. Despite tilts at Luther elsewhere, Kierkegaard is aware of his Lutheran debt here. Externally, a person such as is described in the last sentence of the quotation seems no different to the judge. But the judge has actually ‘lost himself’, and was no “knight of faith”, in the term Kierkegaard uses for a figure described in a long passage within *Fear and Trembling*.⁶⁶¹ (The passage bears close reading since it is too long to quote here.) This “knight” is someone who has so come to terms with the infinite, that he is truly at home in the finite. His enjoyment of the everyday aspects of the finite is very relaxed and attractive.

Rudd grasps the point that Kierkegaard is making through the “knight”. (“Infinite resignation” here is Kierkegaard’s term for something less relaxed and attractive, and less laudable than faith.)

According to the attitude of infinite resignation, the relationship to God is something quite distinct from all other goods, and must be pursued if not by rejecting them, at least by radically relativizing them. But in the attitude of

⁶⁵⁷ These two millennia were an advantage in Hegelian belief, rather than seeming deleterious to belief.

⁶⁵⁸ Kierkegaard, *Practice*, 67.

⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁶⁶¹ Kierkegaard, *Fear*, 67-70.

faith, after having made the infinite resignation, I receive back all that I offered up. Instead of abandoning the finite to struggle painfully towards the infinite, I live with contentment and joy in the finite—precisely by virtue of my relationship to the infinite. This seems to suggest an outlook in which the relationship to God is not one good among others—even if the highest, for which the others have to be renounced. It becomes incommensurable with other goods.⁶⁶²

For this kind of person, ethics are properly relativised and given a narrative temporality by Christian doctrines of forgiveness and divine grace, with individuality existing prior to all social roles and grounded in a proper relation to God.⁶⁶³ On this view, “[w]hen by reason of silence and obedience the morrow is non-existent, today is, it *is*—and then there is joy”.⁶⁶⁴ Thus the “knight of faith” differs from the “knight of infinite resignation”, who tries to accept the supremacy of God, but is without joy.

The “knight of faith”, then, knows *the enjoyment of God, of one another in God, and the appropriate use of things*. The Augustinian nature of Kierkegaard’s project should be readily apparent.

(iii) Love

Hence it seems that for Kierkegaard, a despairing consciousness of sin gives way to a faithful trembling before God, and then a gladness and joy towards others. In this way, a kind of emotional ‘leap’ has taken place. But it is not a ‘leap of faith’ in the irrationalist sense usually predicated of Kierkegaard. Rather, Kierkegaard understands Christian faith to involve changes in a person’s loves.

That is, if a ‘leap’ in Kierkegaard is by now evident, then equally clearly, it is not a leap into irrationality, or into self-definition through the radical act of choice. Rather, it is an Augustinian ‘leap’—a leap of the affections, away from the moral primacy of the self toward the infinite ‘otherness’ of God. We do not properly live, claims Kierkegaard, until we undergo this leap.

This was the clear trajectory of *Either/Or*. The terrible aesthete was entertained by the caprice of his quirky moods, irrespective of others; and the judge’s solution was boorish in its self-justifying conventionality, in its smugness toward others (particularly his wife), and in its poor account of emotion. Only the Jylland pastor pointed a way forward, calling upon his hearers for a kind of view that overturns the judge’s confidence, and gives the aesthete’s yearnings a home. His strange proclamation, that “in relation to God you are always in the

⁶⁶² Rudd, 151.

⁶⁶³ Ibid., 173.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid., citing Kierkegaard, *Lilies of the Field and the Birds of the Air*.

wrong,” was not offered as “a truth you must acknowledge,” nor as “a consolation that alleviates your pain,” nor as “a compensation for something better”, each of which would simply be for the subject to continue his or her self-referencing, self-fulfilling course. Rather,

it is a joy in which you win a victory over yourself and over the world, your delight, your song of praise, your adoration, a demonstration that your love is happy, as only that love can be with which one loves God.⁶⁶⁵

This astonishing sentence can make no sense unless an *affectational* ‘leap’ is on view—that is, a wholesale transference of the affections to an object other than the self. Only such a ‘leap’ can account both for “your love is happy” and the “victory over yourself”. The leap radically downgrades the moral primacy of the self in relation to God, “as only that love can ... with which one loves God”, in a movement that “is a joy ... your delight, your song of praise, your adoration”.

That the Jylland pastor is not mad, and that Kierkegaard is not toying with us again, is clear when this trajectory straightforwardly continues into *Works of Love*—an extended, overtly Christian meditation on the divine command to love, some four years and nine works later. There, God is what Kierkegaard calls the “middle term” of our relationship with others:

For ultimately love to God is the decisive thing; from it stems love to the neighbour, but paganism never suspected this. They left God out; they made earthly love and friendship into love, and abominated selfishness. But the Christian commandment of love commands men to love God above all else, and next to love the neighbour. In earthly love and friendship partiality is the middle term. In love to the neighbour, God is the middle term; if you love God above all else, then you also love your neighbour and in your neighbour every man. Only by loving God above all else can one love his neighbour in the other man.⁶⁶⁶

Properly to ‘see’ others is somehow to see them ‘through’ God—we see and estimate them with God’s estimate. This cannot be done until God is for us this ‘middle term’. Anything less is mercilessly targeted by Kierkegaard as so much bourgeois ethical trash. Liberal Christianity’s penchant for earthly love, friendship, and benevolence—but without fearful trembling before the absolute God—is as thin for Kierkegaard as moral philosophy’s emaciated categorisation of love as ‘altruism’.

This transference of affection results, as Ronald Marshall puts it, in an exposition of ‘self-hatred’ in *Works of Love* that “excluded all self-destructive impulses while including all self-effacing ones”, a therapy-of-self that results not in inertia, but in the focal love of God

⁶⁶⁵ Kierkegaard, *Either-Or II*, 351.

⁶⁶⁶ Søren Kierkegaard, *Works of Love* (1847), tr. David F. Swenson and Lillian M. Swenson, with a foreword by Douglas V. Steere, (Princeton: University Press, 1946), 48.

and neighbour.⁶⁶⁷ Thus *Works of Love* is ‘news from the graveyard’ because in that place, in our regard for dead loved ones, supremely unselfish love is put to the test. To love in that way there, requires the right kind of ‘self-hatred’ in order to succeed.

Everywhere where Christianity exists there is also self-abnegation, which is Christianity’s essential form. In order to live as a Christian, one must first and foremost become sober; but self-abnegation is exactly the transition through which a man, in the meaning of the eternal, becomes sober.⁶⁶⁸

The language might seem dangerous, and despite qualifications (“there is a legitimate self-love but it is not about liking oneself. Just so there is also a bad self-hatred but it is not about disliking oneself”⁶⁶⁹), might risk drawing attention away from God as the new and final terminus for love and affection. But the main point here is to notice the extraordinary nature of this leap, and how intrinsically it concerns the affections. In this connection, a word on Kierkegaard’s treatment of social relationships now seems appropriate.

c) Love, truth and social relationships

The alliance of Kierkegaard with Augustine is by now clear, as are the debts of both to 1 John 4:7-11 (which concerns loving God and each other in response to God’s love for us). A human being cannot know herself as a ‘self’, until she grasps that ‘selves’ actually have ‘otherness’ at the base of their ‘soul’.⁶⁷⁰ Kierkegaard’s language differs from Augustine’s—compare “you made us for yourself and our hearts find no peace until they rest in you”,⁶⁷¹ to “[t]he self is a relation which relates to itself ... a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity.”⁶⁷² But the result is the same. For Kierkegaard, modern contentions for self-identity, -realisation, -esteem, -actualisation, are despair, as is mere ‘altruism’. These fail by not locating the primary focus of attention toward the otherness of God, and then by extension, to the otherness of the world and its people. Consider the similarity between Mathewes’ assessment of Augustine, and what we have seen in Kierkegaard:

This is the ultimate theological point of Augustine’s analysis of selfhood—that the self finds itself, in fact it *is* a self, only insofar as it is engaged by another, a divine other. This is at least as much a matter of affective and conative realities as cognitive; for the whole of *De trinitate* is meant to teach, in Lewis Ayres’ felicitous phrase, “the education of desire,” to educate the

⁶⁶⁷ Ronald F. Marshall, “News From The Graveyard: Kierkegaard’s Analysis of Christian Self-Hatred,” *Pro Ecclesia* 9 no. 1 (2000): 21. The title is also intended, of course, as a pun on the original meaning of Kierkegaard’s surname.

⁶⁶⁸ Kierkegaard, *Love*, 46.

⁶⁶⁹ Marshall, 21-22.

⁶⁷⁰ See above, 112.

⁶⁷¹ Augustine, *Conf.*, 21 (I.1).

⁶⁷² Kierkegaard, *Sickness*, 43.

agent's desires toward right love of God, and to teach the agent that their desires, however crooked, have always already had God as their final end all along.

... Augustine offers a picture of selfhood inextricably intertwined with otherness and community. Augustine's anthropology affirms that we are most ourselves when we are most fully related to others, indeed, that otherness and self-hood intermingle at every level of the self's reality.⁶⁷³

But various concerns might intervene. To locate 'moral primacy' in 'the other' might entail the obliteration of valid personal interests. 'Personal identity' or 'self-esteem' might suffer. Anyone with these concerns will react negatively on hearing Kierkegaard's 'graveyard news' about proper Christian 'self-hatred' bringing a kind of release.⁶⁷⁴

Such concerns might seem to be confirmed when we find the attractive 'knight of faith' to differ sharply from the prophetic 'witness to the truth' in Kierkegaard's final literature. There seems to be the frank exchange of joy for suffering, and of delight for asceticism. Whereas the 'knight of faith enjoyed his social relationships, Kierkegaard's later social concerns are expressed in hostility and polemic. 'Religiousness B', then, is expressed both as "demand[ing] a thoroughly social ethics", but also "in a radically individualistic and ascetic fashion, as a negation of all 'worldly' commitments".⁶⁷⁵ However Rudd interprets the tension not as contradiction, but as dialectic:

The dialectic of the stages thus concludes with a synthesis of the two factors—social commitment and individuality—which hitherto had been played off against one another; and with each being raised to its highest intensity by the Christian demands for agape and for personal responsibility before God.⁶⁷⁶

Kierkegaard believed himself to be called to polemical 'witness' after Bishop Martensen's eulogy of the 'accommodationist' Bishop Mynster. Kierkegaard's attack on Mynster, and his calls for people to leave the Danish church, provokes debate over the degree to which Kierkegaard's views changed during this time.⁶⁷⁷ (Matters are complicated by Kierkegaard's encroaching illness). Kierkegaard would seem vindicated by Martensen's interesting failure to engage with any of Kierkegaard's charges, preoccupied as the Bishop was with Kierkegaard's threat to Church membership and Church public-relations. ("We may regard

⁶⁷³ Charles T. Mathewes, "Pluralism, Otherness, and the Augustinian Tradition," *Modern Theology* 14 no. 1 (1998): 99-100. See further Mathewes, "Anthropology," 196-202 & 213-216.

⁶⁷⁴ See above, 218, n.667.

⁶⁷⁵ Rudd, 25-26.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁷ Gouwens, 209-20, esp. 210; contra Rudd, 164-69. Gouwens defends fundamental continuity and integrity in Kierkegaard's final phase, against Rudd's picture of a decline. Nonetheless, Gouwens acknowledges and recounts with Rudd this shift from 'knight' to 'witness'.

it as felicitous that he died when he did, or the whole thing might have ended up by being extremely annoying.”⁶⁷⁸)

It seems that Kierkegaard’s own ‘religiousness B’ required an inevitable social collision. The *passion* at work here—both as ‘interest’ in God and as resultant ‘emotion’—accounts for both the joy of the ‘knight’ and the suffering polemic of the ‘witness’.

d) Shortcomings in ‘Christian emotion’?

An account of ‘Christian emotion’ hardly seems to be exhausted by the categories of Kierkegaard’s account. He seems mainly to consider the negative experiences that propel and follow the ‘leap’ of love (e.g. ‘despair’, ‘fear and trembling’, ‘suffering’). Alongside these, his references to more positive experiences (e.g. ‘love’, ‘joy’, ‘gladness’) seem too general, and function almost only at an emblematic level, since we do not find there any deeper structures of affective deliberative logic to assist us in an ongoing, everyday manner.

Gouwens, who is not particularly interested in ‘passion’, argues from the emergent ‘historicity’ aspect in Kierkegaard that “the development of personal emotional and ethico-religious capacities ... will link Kierkegaard much more strongly with the virtue tradition in moral philosophy and theology than the stereotype of ‘the existentialist Kierkegaard’ will allow.”⁶⁷⁹ The Sartrean existentialist ‘leap’ emphatically opposes any notions of virtue. But if Kierkegaard seeks for an Augustinian ‘leap’ of the affections, then he is a friend of virtue.

Therefore perhaps Kierkegaard should best be seen as offering a prolegomena, as it were, to a Christian account of affective deliberative logic as embodied in a theological theory of virtue. I will consider virtue in the next chapter—not with special reference to Kierkegaard, since he is hardly a leading exponent. I will rather suggest that the NT steers its discussion of ‘Christian emotion’ in a more positive direction, as a set of lively virtues. Treatments of virtue in the NT give a more satisfying and ‘fine-grained’ account as to what properly constitutes Christian emotion.

5. Nietzsche?

Despite any shortcomings in Kierkegaard’s account, he assists us to form a moral theology of emotion that amply outflanks major Nietzschean objections. In this section, I will outline how Christian theology’s ability to outflank Nietzsche stems from a deep *agreement* between Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, where both defend subjectivity, passion, and ‘self-overcoming’, and where both agree that Christian ‘sin’ is indeed a ‘madness’ when seen

⁶⁷⁸ Martensen; cited in Croxall, 243.

⁶⁷⁹ Gouwens, 26.

from the ground upon which Nietzsche stands. This deep agreement renders Nietzsche's arguments insufficient to discredit Christianity since for Kierkegaard, even emotional experiences require the recognition of a wider order. Nietzschean 'affirmation of life' just brings boredom, and slave morality is not finally Christian, just as true Christian leadership is not finally ascetic or self-interested. Christian faith brings joyful, alluring, relaxed responses to created order, which compete easily against Nietzsche's restless voracity.

A passage from each writer highlights their basic agreement:

Christianity is a system, a consistently thought out and *complete* view of things. If one breaks out of it a fundamental idea, the belief in God, one thereby breaks the whole thing to pieces: one has nothing of any consequence left in one's hands. Christianity presupposes that man does not know, *cannot* know what is good for him and what is evil: he believes in God, who alone knows. Christian morality is a command: its origin is transcendental; it is beyond all criticism, all right to criticize; it possesses truth only if God is truth—it stands or falls with the belief in God.⁶⁸⁰

In all moments of laxness, sluggishness, dullness, when the sensuous nature of man predominates, Christianity seems madness, since it is incommensurable with any finite wherefore. What is the use of it, then? The answer is: Hold thy peace! It is the absolute!⁶⁸¹

These assessments of Christianity differ in one key respect, since unlike Kierkegaard, Nietzsche has a voluntarist understanding of Christianity.⁶⁸² But there is deep agreement here about the extent to which Christianity claims the subject.

That Nietzsche objects to the extensive claim of Christianity is seen in his response to the Christian conception of sin—the “madness” of it, to which “whole masses ... fall victim”.⁶⁸³ Kierkegaard agrees with this assessment. Given Christianity's claim upon people, such a response to Christianity *entirely* befits the ground upon which Nietzsche stands. When upon this ground, there is indeed a certain “madness”⁶⁸⁴ and “horror”⁶⁸⁵ to Christianity.

But once someone has surrendered to the divine claim upon them, key arenas of experience are enjoyed in a new way. For Kierkegaard, true Christianity makes emotional experiences intelligible, and slave morality is thereby critiqued. Christian leadership is brought to proper order, and restless voracity is eclipsed by joyful responses to reality. Whereas Nietzsche's system attempts to appropriate intelligibility in these arenas, Kierkegaard simply undercuts

⁶⁸⁰ Nietzsche, *Twilight*, 80-81 (*Expeditions* §5).

⁶⁸¹ Kierkegaard, *Practice*, 66.

⁶⁸² See further below, page 221.

⁶⁸³ Nietzsche, *Daybreak* I, 77; in Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, 150.

⁶⁸⁴ Kierkegaard, *Practice*, 66.

⁶⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 66, 71.

such claims. Therefore given their basic agreements, Kierkegaard can 'outflank' Nietzsche by rendering his argument insufficient to discredit Christianity. I will now amplify the mode of this undercutting and outflanking by way of Solomon's Nietzschean agenda for the passions.

We noted how Solomon sought to defend subjectivity in the interests of a passion-led 'self-overcoming' and self-change. On this view, passions are chosen, changed, nurtured, respected, and generally perceived by subjects as the centre of personal meaning and the primary locus for harmony between thought, will and action. This was toward the maximisation of personal dignity and self-esteem, exemplified (disconcertingly) in drunkenness, 'self-torture' and promiscuity. 'Reality' impinges upon the agent's internal 'surreality'—an inner world mediated by constitutively-judging emotions—and emotionally derived intentions commit the agent to courses of action that alter 'reality' (and thus the agent's own 'surreality').

Obvious points of similarity arise between this Nietzschean approach and some Kierkegaardian themes. Kierkegaard explicitly defends and commends a certain use of subjectivity; a certain kind of 'self-overcoming' and change; and a profound respect for passion (particularly understood). The co-ordination of passion, thought, will and action is massively central, as are the epistemic implications of 'emotion' in service of this co-ordination.

It seems odd that Kierkegaard's concern for subjectivity and passion does not meet with more respect in Solomon. For Peter Mehl, Solomon is "exceptionally askew" in holding Kierkegaard to be an irrationalist whose psychology can only convince the morally inclined. Indeed, Solomon "seems to have a narrower view of rationality than does Kierkegaard", whose "reasons are existential reasons; that is, they are founded in his anthropology, in his picture of the universally human, *the* subjective."⁶⁸⁶ As we have seen, this anthropology (with its subjective dimensions) echoes Augustine in its contingency upon a network of human and divine relationships.

We have also seen how Kierkegaard's project concerns the individual's ongoing subjective 'wrestle' to locate the self within the objective world. "There is, to speak with a contemporary voice, a more 'holist' conception of rationality being employed by Kierkegaard."⁶⁸⁷ Therefore, not only does Kierkegaard *not* merely write for the morally

⁶⁸⁶ Peter J. Mehl, "Kierkegaard and the Relativist Challenge to Practical Philosophy," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 14 (1987): 265.

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 272.

inclined; indeed, not only does he not merely write for ‘any rational creature’ (as Hegel or Kant)—“it is Kierkegaard’s claim ... that he is writing truths holding for any rational *and at the same time existing and accountable* creature.”⁶⁸⁸ Of course, Kierkegaard’s insistence on the ‘leap’ towards a new love, requiring the deepest recognition of personal sin, is a most basic rejection of Enlightenment objectivity (as applied to the self, not to the natural world). Such a recognition and rejection elicits, unsurprisingly, the ire of the academy (and sadly, of apostate parts of the Church).

Whereas Roberts saw with Kierkegaard how passion as *emotion* is actually contingent upon passion as *interest*,⁶⁸⁹ it would appear that Solomon makes no such distinction. (Passion as interest might equate to those ‘affections’ that for Dixon are lacking in Solomon.) Perhaps Solomon has, ironically, fallen victim to his own ‘Myth of the Passions’ by not seeing Kierkegaard’s ‘holism’, and by treating Kierkegaard’s distinctive rationality as that ‘mere emotion’ to which he objects. If Mehl, Rudd, Roberts (and Gouwens⁶⁹⁰) are correct, then Solomon has certainly missed how deeply coincident Kierkegaard’s concerns are with his own, and Kierkegaard’s obvious significance to his own (and Nietzsche’s) project.

By extension, Kierkegaard would have much to say against *Nietzsche’s* project. We could summarise some of these proleptic critiques as follows:

- (i) When the passions are ordered (as in Solomon) only by ‘self-esteem’ and without a wider order, even the aesthete is dubious. Kierkegaard’s ‘A’ proleptically critiques the Nietzschean ideal in his acknowledgement that emotional life requires a wider order. ‘Self-creation’ is thus a pitiful, stultifying enterprise.
- (ii) The *ennui* experienced by the aesthete, even given the ‘rotation of crops’, puts a first-order question against any simplistic ‘affirmation of life’.
- (iii) The rejection of the Judge’s ethic presages Nietzsche’s attack on slave morality, certainly by an agreement over the pusillanimity of bourgeois ethics. The rejection of it as not, finally, Christian, must deflect much of Nietzsche’s claim (that slave morality constitutes Christian life).
- (iv) Nietzsche’s ‘ascetic priest’ was intended to ‘unmask’ all Christian leadership as self-interested. Kierkegaard’s relentless critique of degenerate, self-interested

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid., 265.

⁶⁸⁹ Roberts, “Passion,” 88-91.

⁶⁹⁰ Gouwens, 26, 35, 44, 51-53 & passim, whose observations about subjectivity etc. closely parallel the other authors.

Christian leadership (such as Mynster's) agrees that there is often a serious problem with such leadership; nevertheless, the force of Nietzsche's attack is deflected, since Kierkegaard's frank polemical demand for reform implies the possibility of excellent forms of Christian service. (Nietzsche, we recall, also blunted his own attack by his special-pleading against 'life-enhancing' Christian service.)

- (v) The vision of the knight of faith's life of joy is alluring enough, in its relaxed responses to created order, to compete easily against Nietzsche's restless voracity.



Kierkegaard's 'leap of love' is effectively a prolegomena to a Christian account of affective deliberative logic that can be embodied in *a theological theory of virtue*. Virtue theories attempt to do justice both to the habits and to the emotional dispositions of agents, and do not rate objectivity over subjectivity (even if virtue theories differ in their objective points of reference). A theological theory of virtue has the capacity to retain the best aspects of 'Christian emotion', while giving us more detail for the task of deliberation. I will now turn to such a theological theory of virtue, with special reference to the 'virtue lists' of the NT.

Chapter VIII: Emotion and ethics in a theological theory of virtue

So far in the thesis, I have outlined three approaches to the relationship between ethics and emotion. An Enlightenment approach admits of no relationship (except in emotivism). A Nietzschean approach only endorses action that springs from passion. In a theological approach, a logic of love governs responses to the moral field, shapes deliberative logic, and requires divine reordering both adventitiously and by participation.

But how might the logic of love translate into normative practises for the individual? While I do not claim to canvas all possible answers to this question, what piques my curiosity is the degree to which *virtue*, in various guises, has appeared and reappeared during this investigation. Clearly, the logic of love implies some account of virtue, and I will in this chapter seek to discern such an account. I will proceed by bringing the account of virtue entailed by theology's logic of love into conversation with some other modern accounts of virtue. I make no claim exhaustively to have engaged all modern accounts of virtue.

In Section One I recount two older approaches to virtue. These require 'something more' than virtue for their fluency; we suspect this 'something more' to be theology's 'logic of love'. In Section Two, I describe a neo-Aristotelian project that understands virtue generically and universally, and seeks a common rational ground for virtuous conduct, perhaps to supplant all prior deontic conceptions. I show how it also relies upon 'something more' (despite some claims to the contrary), which turns out to be an ordered moral field. Moreover, the 'something more' it usually assumes of theological ethics (the divine command) is not in fact considered by Christian theology to be its entire organising principle.

Section Three begins to organise and extend insights about virtue that have been glimpsed throughout Part Two. Aquinas' virtue produces ordinate passion and requires love for its intelligibility. Augustine's virtues are teleological. Virtues in Calvin and Augustine seem to function as statements of *aim*, and perhaps of *affirmation given and received*—but not of *self-description*, which can inveigle agents from proper scrutiny of their acts.

In Section Four, to adjust the theological account, I associate a modern analysis of Christian virtue with NT 'virtue catalogues'. The NT catalogues offer a nuanced descriptive language for various correspondences between an agent's affections and the order of reality, thereby providing a language *brief* enough for quick deliberation (even if subsequently, the act proves erroneous). Secondly, this language does not direct specific acts, offering instead a degree of creative freedom to 'invent' action most befitting specific loved others. Thirdly,

Christian communities become places for participants to learn by craft-skill, and from careful evaluations of them by others. I suggest, by way of postscript, how conscience becomes intelligible not as a basis for *deliberation*, but as a window for *reflection* on my (perhaps disordered) loves.

In sum, this chapter outlines how the logic of love generates a unique conception of virtue. Virtues are multifaceted responses to the complexities of reality; they are richly emotional; and they are instrumental to action within the moral field rather than being instrumental to the discernment of moral order.

1. ‘Something more’ than virtue: a longstanding fluency

In this section, I will recount two older approaches to virtue. These require ‘something more’ than virtue for their fluency, and I will suggest that this ‘something more’ is perhaps theology’s ‘logic of love’. Although my emphasis in this section will be upon these older approaches, I will first pause to make an observation about the modern resurgence of virtue theory.

The modern resurgence of virtue theory seems correlative to a growing interest in the emotions. There are rumblings of agreement that emotional consonance is to be expected within virtue’s intentions, as a constitutive element of virtue.⁶⁹¹ The broadly neo-Aristotelian MacIntyre is representative:

Virtues are dispositions not only to act in particular ways, but also to feel particular ways. To act virtuously is not, as Kant was later to think, to act against inclination; it is to act from inclination formed by the cultivation of the virtues.⁶⁹²

Not all agree that Kant and Aristotle are so mutually exclusive,⁶⁹³ but our purpose is not to arbitrate over that (although we have already seen Kant’s respect for emotion, against his refusal to give them epistemic priority.) Of greater interest is this emotional component to virtue—that somehow, virtues pertain to affections.

Only those whose desires, passions, and emotions have been properly molded can see. They have disciplined [in Iris Murdoch’s phrase] the fat, relentless ego. And then, in turn, since their character is virtuous, there will be no conflict between what they see and what they do.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁹¹ For this insight, and some of the references that follow, I am indebted to Rufus Black, “Towards an Ecumenical Ethic: Reconciling the Work of Grisez, Hauerwas and O’Donovan.” (D.Phil., Oxford University, 1996), ch. 5. My thanks to Luke Bretherton for drawing this thesis to my attention.

⁶⁹² MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 149.

⁶⁹³ Hursthouse, *passim*.

⁶⁹⁴ Gilbert C. Meilaender, *The Theory and Practice of Virtue* (Notre Dame: University Press, 1984), 62.

We shall see that the virtues of Christian theology have such a component. But given the logic of love, a theological account of virtue will proceed differently from an Aristotelian account. Two older writers exhibit a fluency about virtue and an understanding of virtues as varied, richly emotional and instrumental within a wider moral order. Both of them work from a theological theory of virtue.

a) Anne Elliot and Mrs Smith

Anne found in Mrs. Smith the good sense and agreeable manners which she had almost ventured to depend on, and a disposition to converse and be cheerful beyond her expectation. Neither the dissipations of the past—and she had lived very much in the world, nor the restrictions of the present; neither sickness nor sorrow seemed to have closed her heart or ruined her spirits.

In the course of a second visit she talked with great openness, and Anne's astonishment increased. She could scarcely imagine a more cheerless situation in itself than Mrs. Smith's. She had been very fond of her husband,—she had buried him. She had been used to affluence,—it was gone. She had no child to connect her with life and happiness again, no relations to assist in the arrangement of perplexed affairs, no health to make all the rest supportable. Her accommodations were limited to a noisy parlour, and a dark bedroom behind, with no possibility of moving from one to the other without assistance, which there was only one servant in the house to afford, and she never quitted the house but to be conveyed into the warm bath.—Yet, in spite of all this, Anne had reason to believe that she had moments only of languor and depression, to hours of occupation and enjoyment. How could it be?—She watched—observed—reflected—and finally determined that this was not a case of fortitude or resignation only.—A submissive spirit might be patient, a strong understanding would supply resolution, but here was something more; here was that elasticity of mind, that disposition to be comforted, that power of turning readily from evil to good, and of finding employment which carried her out of herself, which was from Nature alone. It was the choicest gift of Heaven ...⁶⁹⁵

Jane Austen's characterisation of Mrs. Smith is just another example of her usually penetrating insight. But here, there is also a strikingly effortless facility to cluster thought forms that moderns approach with difficulty.

Mrs. Smith's response to her own wretched condition is as surprising now as it would have been then, and Anne's admiration for her is reasonable enough. But it would be entertaining to imagine a thoughtful modern Anne's account of Mrs. Smith's unusual demeanour.

Moderns live in an age that seeks for control, leisure and material benefits but is beset by melancholy. Modern Anne, then, would also be astonished by Mrs. Smith's "moments only of languor and depression" against "hours of occupation and enjoyment". "How could it be?" remains the most apposite question.

⁶⁹⁵ Jane Austen, *Persuasion* (1816), with a foreword by Judith Terry, *Everyman's Library* edition, vol. 72 (London: David Campbell Publishers, 1992), 153-54.

Modern Anne's answer might include 'courage'. Less clearly, Mrs. Smith might possess 'strength', or more mysteriously, inner 'resources'. Modern Anne, in tacit admission that without actual explanation, a thin description must do, might even resort to Mrs. Smith's 'positive attitude'. The complimentary mood would find its nadir in those lamest of modern accolades for the elderly, that Mrs Smith is an 'inspiration'—or sadly, even a 'resource'. (By this stage, modern Anne is frankly signalling her unconcern to *understand* Mrs Smith.) Conversely, she might feel forced to assert Mrs. Smith's basic irrationality, as if the older woman should be angrier, having adopted a passive acceptance of her situation that is at best misguided. 'Submission' would certainly only occur to modern Anne as a pejorative.

But Austen's Anne sees differently, having seen how Mrs. Smith sees differently. Although Mrs. Smith has little power to change her overall situation, in Anne's account she remains proactively at its centre. Mrs. Smith's activity includes a form of thought, an ethical stance, and an approach to the world, where each informs the others. This issues forth in what first interests Anne: Mrs. Smith's "good sense and agreeable manners" and her "disposition to converse and be cheerful". Hours of watchful observation and reflection give way to a final determination that this is "not a case of fortitude or resignation only"—an intriguing rejection that passes subtle judgment on the classical tradition, although artful irony ("not a case of") makes it a quite firm one. At some level, both Anne and Mrs. Smith remain deeply unpersuaded that either Aristotle or the Stoics can help.

The next sentence could be a quick dialogue between Georgian Christian and Enlightenment virtues: "A submissive spirit might be patient, a strong understanding would supply resolution". Neither Anne nor Jane Austen are simply choosing among historic alternatives, as if this boring pastime mattered. Rather, Anne's internal reflection and determination exhibits an advanced capability to question and critique available conceptions of personal virtue. Fortitude and submission do seem more workable, but at best offer only a partial answer to the conundrum of Mrs. Smith.

For "something more" is needed. There is no need here of virtue for virtue's sake, just as Anne does not reject these virtues as ridiculous, since they are not. Various virtues may or may not be helpful: patience and understanding account for more than fortitude and resignation. But more importantly, they highlight their own inadequacy: there needs be a "something more" to make sense of Mrs. Smith, and for Mrs. Smith to make sense of her world.

And the extra is a fascinating cluster: "here was that elasticity of mind, that disposition to be comforted, that power of turning readily from evil to good, and of finding employment

which carried her out of herself'. To expound the elasticity, disposition, power and employments that constitute Mrs. Smith would not improve what Jane Austen has already laid before us with clarity. Suffice to note that Mrs. Smith's proactivity, which Anne respects so much, is pictured as a lively dialectical engagement between an inner thought world, and an external reality broadly understood as good enough to be worth persistent interest. Mrs. Smith has 'leapt', it seems: she rejects interiority as a satisfactory resting place, and carries herself "out of herself". Her 'movement' parallels that 'leap' which acknowledges 'otherness' at the 'base of the soul'.

Thus Anne completes the account with a twinned assertion. Mrs Smith's demeanour was "from Nature alone. It was the choicest gift of Heaven". This final determination is a succinctly formed theological anthropology, and its two clauses sum up complementary aspects of our investigation.

- On the one hand, a proper engagement between the ethical and the emotional is "from nature alone". Like Mrs Smith, people respond viscerally, emotively and with action, to the goods (and evils) of the reality in which they are located. To denigrate this 'natural' response might presage a Manichean dualism. The deliberative logic of Mrs Smith's virtue has its love(s): she responds in love to a moral field surrounding her. We can even suspect she participates in the logic of love commended.
- And yet, to be like Mrs. Smith is "the choicest gift of heaven", for such responses cannot succeed without radical, and divine, intervention. For how else can we explain or reduplicate the Mrs. Smith who goes beyond herself—who, in Austen's memorable phrase is "carried ... out of herself"? To underrate this 'going beyond' is Pelagian. Moderns too easily gesture toward selfless people in either pious non-comprehension or in open contempt. Such responses fail to reckon with the "choicest gift[s] of heaven", and fail also to consider the actual mode of inherence of selflessness in a person when their subjective report—as in the case of our four theologians—is of a new view based upon the love of God. According to Anne, Mrs Smith's virtue also shares the logic of love 'poured in'.

This passage from Austen points us toward *virtue* as a kind of 'middle term' in our investigation. It has kept reappearing in various guises, and requires some attention. It is a 'middle term' insofar as on the one hand, it can embrace aspects of emotion and action: through it, 'ethico-emotional' positions become intelligible in a new and non-punctiliar way. But on the other hand, it is a 'middle term', because it cannot alone make sense of a

life. If someone is not to degenerate into “a case of” some virtue, then “something more” is needed. The ‘something more’ seems to be theology’s logic of love.

b) Aelred of Rievaulx

Aelred of Rievaulx’ *Spiritual Friendship*⁶⁹⁶ describes the operation of virtue in reference to the prosaic daily good of friendship. His recourse to virtue seems at first to be intelligible by reference to the natural virtues. Even so, he finds it necessary further to describe the virtues of friendship by reference to “something more”.

The Cistercians were a reformed Benedictine order, and as abbot of one of its Yorkshire houses, Aelred enforces Benedict’s *Rule*. The uniquely Christian tension of universal love against particular affection is highlighted in the *Rule* chapter 54 (against gifts and letters from family) and chapter 69 (against monks defending one another, particularly if blood-related). Benedict sought to minimise natural bonds of family, since as an eschatological witness, the new community was to constitute itself along the lines of that place where “they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels” (Mt. 22:30; Mk 12:25; Lk. 20:34-36). However, the strictures of the *Rule* were eventually taken to interdict friendship. As one who enjoys friendship, Aelred seeks to reinstate friendships harmonious to the *Rule* and within the monastery.⁶⁹⁷ Appropriately enough, his investigation is pursued as three dialogues with his friends.

Disordered affection disorders friendship. ‘Puerile’ friendship derives from “a wandering and sportive affection” that powerfully draws people together but without discernment between “the licit and the illicit” (II.57). Such friends “catch fire together as one” in “wretched agreement[s]” that justify all acts, because for both, “nothing is sweeter than their friendship and ... nothing more just” (I.40).

For Aelred this typifies the incandescent friendship of youth (II.58). This is the form of life, we might say, among not just one but now two of Kierkegaard’s aesthetes. Such friendships “follow no [Aristotelian] mean”, nor consider judgment nor honour; they follow “the impetus of emotion” without ethical discrimination (I.41). “[T]here is nothing certain, nothing constant, nothing secure” in these friendships (I.42). Affection and emotion are present in this form of life, but are without a ‘home’, as it were.

⁶⁹⁶ Aelred, *Spiritual Friendship* (c. 1164), tr. Mark F. Williams, (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1994).

⁶⁹⁷ Cf. Mark F. Williams’ opening comments in his appendix (ibid., 91). This appendix proceeds to give a good account of and response to recent speculation over Aelred’s sexuality, which will not be considered here.

But ‘disorder’ is *not* constituted by some evil intrinsic to affection, desire or emotion. ‘Disorder’ is just disorder, nothing more, and Aelred has understood all there is to understand of its ‘banality’. Here is a *shared* voracity and selective sight, where reason fails to discriminate between goods. (“[O]ften affection precedes friendship, but it ought never to be followed unless it is led by reason, moderated by a sense of honour, and ruled by justice”, II.57.) This is why affection and desire repeatedly attract metaphors of fire, and are seen to be in a kind of war with fundamental elements of virtue. This, of course, will not do for the monastery, and suggests why the *Rule* closely regulated friendship.

But such friendships can become the start of something good (I.44), for even in disorder the natural good of friendship is never erased. Interestingly, even disordered friendships generate unconscious versions of virtue—a kind of loyalty at least, and even a kind of ‘justice’. Such inadvertent emergence of virtue suggests that friendships rely upon virtue, and are somehow ‘governed’ by it.

Aelred is clearly in dialogue with Cicero here. In Cicero’s *De Amicitia*, Laelius defines friendship (the definition is repeatedly deployed by Aelred), and then compares friendship to the other goods that humans might enjoy. He concludes that “there are those who place the ‘chief good’ in virtue and that is really a noble view; but this very virtue is the parent and preserver of friendship and without virtue friendship cannot exist at all.”⁶⁹⁸ That is, friendship both establishes and relies upon virtue.

Aelred and Ivo hold that “Cicero was unaware of the excellence of true friendship, since he was unaware of Christ, who is friendship’s principle and goal” (I.8). But they do not at first proceed much further than Cicero. “Friendship establishes all the virtues by means of its own charm, and strikes down vices by its own excellence” (II.10), and enduring friendships, “formed in Christ, advanced according to Christ, and perfected by Christ” (I.10) are *consciously* informed by the four classical, ‘natural’ virtues. “Where friends love each other [rightly], they can desire nothing which is not fitting ... Surely prudence guides this friendship, justice rules it, courage watches over it, and moderation tempers it” (I.48-49). Intentionally virtuous friendship is a step beyond the inadvertent emergence of virtue; but little about friendship seems particularly formed by Christ as its “principle and goal”. Friendships, whether ordered or disordered, generate and become governed by forms of natural virtue, since natural virtue is simultaneously regulatory and emergent by its very constitution.

⁶⁹⁸ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Amicitia* (c. 44 AD), tr. William Armistead Falconer, Loeb Classical Library. 28 vols. vol. 20 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929), 131 (vi.20).

Yet as the dialogues develop, Aelred argues that formation and advancement “in Christ” requires “something more” than natural virtue. This “something more”, which both orders friendship and establishes virtue, is explicated in terms of a ‘salvation history’ of friendship. Friendship is finally contingent upon God’s creative imprint *and* God’s redemptive intention (I.51-61). An angelic community, where “the sweetest love created a unity of will and affection” (I.56), is also humanity’s telos; and in a fallen world, the “authority of law” (I.51, 61) redemptively orders friendship toward this telos, “regulat[ing] the same friendship which nature begins and custom strengthens” (I.61). (Certainly Aelred has in mind the ‘laws’ of Christ and the Scriptures, but we wonder if here he also salutes the *Rule*.) If “sweetest love” and “unity of will and affection” constitute true friendship, Aelred’s second and third dialogues develop Christian love, rather than natural virtue, as the interpretative key to such friendship (II.18-21).

“Love is the source and origin of friendship, for although love can exist without friendship, friendship can never exist without love” (III.2). For Aelred, aspects of love range from natural affection (a form of positive love), to rational love (such as ‘love’ toward an enemy, in obedience to the divine command, and in view of their value, III.2). Friendship blends positive, benevolent and rational aspects⁶⁹⁹ of love:

Love comes simultaneously from reason and affection when someone ingratiates himself in the mind of another through the attractiveness of his character and the delight one takes in his honourable life; the mind urges us to love this person simply because of the merit of his virtue. Thus reason is joined to affection, so that love is pure because it comes from reason, and agreeable because it comes from affection. (III.3)⁷⁰⁰

Here, then, is how friendship establishes virtue. A happy consonance occurs between excellences already inherent in a person, and the universal requirement to love them; and all the calls of friendship are measured against a prior (cosmic) love between each friend and God (III.5). Within these boundaries, friendships fundamentally require faithfulness (III.88-90), and thrive upon “love, affection, security and delight”:

Friendship involves love when there is a show of favor that proceeds from benevolence. It involves affection when a certain inner pleasure comes from friendship. It involves security when it leads to a revelation of all one’s secrets and purposes without fear or suspicion. It involves delight when there is a certain meeting of the minds—an agreement that is pleasant and benevolent—concerning all matters, whether happy or sad, which have a bearing on the friendship ... (III.51)

⁶⁹⁹ See above, 117-118.

⁷⁰⁰ This quotation shows the place of rational and positive love. Benevolent love appears in III.51 (see next block quotation).

Aelred goes on to describe the daily moments in which his friendships have assisted him to live virtuously (III.103)—an effect of friendship unintelligible to ‘puerile’ friendships of “sportive affection”. Aelred’s friendships are grounded in love for God and governed by virtue; yet they ‘establish’ virtues. There is room in Benedict’s virtuous community even for friendship, and instead of a monastery eschewing or fearing friendship, its friendships can actually *strengthen* its eschatological witness.⁷⁰¹

In this ‘spiritual friendship’, “something more” gives place to deep affection and a multitude of virtues. The ‘something more’ prevails to order ethical commitment, affection, virtue, and love into a fluent and seamless whole. Possibly in Jane Austen, and certainly in Aelred of Rievaulx, *the ‘something more’ is theology’s logic of love*. (This claim probably only reiterates O’Donovan, where “virtue is the conformity of love to the structure of reality.”⁷⁰²) The logic of love brings fluency to moral discourse about virtue.

2. A new quest

This fluency, though, is easily lost. Modernity critics have long alleged a general loss of moral fluency, citing the collapse of ‘virtue’ into ‘value’;⁷⁰³ the dichotomy of fact against

⁷⁰¹ Consequent to this account are corollaries that moderns might challenge. Friendships are not to be formed lightly, nor broken lightly, except in the sad case of a friend who has “permanently departed from that foundation of friendship which we have agreed upon” (III.7), and from whom a careful, thoughtful withdrawal might become appropriate (III.57-58). But modern friendships cover a wide variety of relationships and rarely begin with explicit foundational agreements. Moreover, in a pluralist setting, friendships across boundaries of religious belief will seem problematic on Aelred’s view. We might call Aelred’s a ‘high’ view of friendship, as against a modern, more ‘relaxed’ view. Without necessarily adjudicating between these, a pause for clarification (and limited defence) of Aelred is in order.

Aelred’s Ciceronian debt includes an ancient consensus that friendships were to be few, loyal and long-lived, and thus chosen carefully in light of their subsequent political ramifications, including a requirement of mutual political assistance. In Aelred’s monastery, the ‘political’ given is that the monks, and therefore particularly monks who are friends, will together seek ends consonant with those of the kingdom of Christ.

This should at least make overt some features of modern friendship which are usually covert. Modern friendships retain elements of foundational agreement, which may remain unnoticed until one friend changes their mind on something the other considers to be crucial. (The religious plurality of modern settings might simply mask *other* domains of agreement that friendships rely upon as crucial.) Moreover, modern friendships arguably require a degree of exchange, which parallels ancient exchanges of political favour, even if not much is at stake in comparison. (That is, if ancient friends expected exchanges of political favours, modern friends expect exchanges e.g. of household favours.)

If Aelred is right to suspect that friendships require various foundational agreements, and then involve some degree of mutual assistance, then to choose a friend carefully is neither callous nor mercenary but is simply illustrative of the governance of friendship by prudence. Aelred might as easily question moderns, who often amass large numbers of ‘friends’ without thought about any agreed ‘basis’ in each of these relationships, nor about the expectations for mutual exchange that are brought to the friendship. (It follows from this absence of thought that the demise of a friendship presents itself just as a matter of circumstance, rather than of explicit consideration.)

Neither Aelred’s ‘high’ approach, nor the ‘relaxed’ modern one, is self-evidently superior.

⁷⁰² O’Donovan, “Augustinian Ethics,” 47; see above, 117-118.

⁷⁰³ Cf. Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The De-Moralization of Society: From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values* (London: IEA Health and Welfare Unit, 1995), 10-12, 18-19.

value (and its corollary in the alleged ‘naturalistic fallacy’),⁷⁰⁴ and the passage of ‘passion’ and ‘affection’ into ‘emotion’.⁷⁰⁵ But a burgeoning ‘virtue ethics’, whilst springing from disillusionment with modernist approaches, does not therefore look to “something more” for a recovery of fluency. (At least, virtue theorists seem often to *think* they do not look to “something more”. We shall go on to find that in fact, they do.)

In this section, I will recount a modern writer’s lament over the modern loss of fluency about virtue. She heralds a neo-Aristotelian revival that seeks for virtuous conduct based in generic rationality. The project seeks also to supplant prior deontic conceptions, which are assumed to derive paradigmatically from a theological ethics where the divine command dictates all. But not only will I argue that the divine command is *not* considered by Christian moral theology to be its entire organising principle, I will also show that the neo-Aristotelian project relies (despite some claims to the contrary) upon ‘something more’—which is to say, upon an ordered moral field. Since Christian theology also conceives of morality as responses to an ordered moral field, and not merely as a response to divine commands, a theological theory of virtue can therefore offer at least as robust an account of virtue as other virtue theories.

a) Miss Anscombe’s revolt

A new mood has been instigated by G.E.M. Anscombe’s seminal attack upon analytical approaches to act and obligation.⁷⁰⁶ Since this attack, Aristotle has been the usual point of departure for theorists interested in virtue.

Anscombe has plenty to say about Christian ethics, since for her all concepts of obligation arise from a Judeo-Christian forensic conception of morality. But insofar as modern moral theology does not accept a lawgiver, all ethics of obligation are rendered baseless. Also, in her estimate, moral philosophy since Sidgwick is consequentialist, sharing among its exponents the justification of what would formerly be called ‘temptation’. A repeated motif is the execution of an innocent person, often used by these thinkers to demonstrate the possibility of ‘moral rightness’ in such an act. For Anscombe, any such justification is only possible where there exists the emaciated shell of Judeo-Christian law (now stripped of

⁷⁰⁴ Cf. George Grant, *Technology and Empire: Perspectives on North America* (Toronto: Anansi, 1969), 118-20; MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 57-59, 84; and Taylor, 53-62. For more on the distinction, the ‘fallacy’ and the history of their discussion, cf. J. Laney, “Characterization and Moral Judgments,” *Journal of Religion* 55 (1975), 412-13; Porter, 43-48; R. Crisp, “Fact/value distinction,” in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig, 10 vols., vol. 3 (London: Routledge, 1998); and A. Thomson, *Critical Reasoning in Ethics: A Practical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1999), 36-44.

⁷⁰⁵ See above, page 62.

⁷⁰⁶ G.E.M. Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy,” *Philosophy* 33 no. 124 (1958).

content and of any ‘giver’). Substitute, she says, for ‘moral rightness’ the term ‘justice’, and this kind of consequentialism cannot succeed: if it is possible somehow to make deliberate executions of the innocent ‘morally right’, it is never possible to make them ‘just’.⁷⁰⁷

This points toward Aristotle, whose account of how to live had no recourse to any lawgiver, and where virtue observably resides within “the activity of thought and choice in regard to the various departments of life—powers and faculties and use of things needed”.⁷⁰⁸ Virtues reflect and extend humanity in its operation *qua* humanity “(and not merely, say, *qua* craftsman or logician)”.⁷⁰⁹ In the absence of any agreed moral ontology, Aristotle’s virtue offers to rescue modern moral philosophy from its post-theistic hangover, and from its consequentialist interlopers. Anscombe’s project, which she confessed herself unable to complete, was toward a new psychology. Not all virtue theory is comprehended by it, but Solomon, Nussbaum and MacIntyre represent the challenge taken up.

b) A virtue for all?

Daniel Statman recognises versions of virtue where aretaic and deontic concepts are complementary, or where deontology is thought an appropriate derivative of virtue. Anscombe’s call altogether to eliminate the deontic, is an “extreme” “replacement” version of virtue ethics, where aretaic notions gain priority once deontology is abandoned.⁷¹⁰ Solomon’s neo-Aristotelian business ethics are difficult to place in this respect, since he avoids abstraction in the interests of accessibility for business readers.⁷¹¹ Nonetheless, a version of Aristotelian virtue is offered in preference to all other ethical systems (particularly Kantian and Christian), “to bring out what is best in ourselves and our shared enterprise.”⁷¹² Functionally, it is a ‘replacement’ thesis.

Virtue is “an exemplary way of getting along with other people, a way of manifesting in one’s thoughts, feelings and actions the ideals and aims of the entire community.”⁷¹³ Traditions or communities or narratives or roles have elsewhere been offered as epistemic

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid., 16.

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid., 14.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid., 6.

⁷¹⁰ Daniel Statman, “Introduction to Virtue Ethics,” in *Virtue Ethics*, ed. Daniel Statman, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 8-9. Bernard Williams is tentatively named as representative of the ‘extreme’ ‘replacement’ approach, but this is simply incorrect (cf. below, 237 n.720).

⁷¹¹ Robert C. Solomon, “Corporate Roles, Personal Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach to Business Ethics,” in *Virtue Ethics*, ed. Daniel Statman, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997).

⁷¹² Ibid., 210.

⁷¹³ Ibid., 218.

substrates from which virtue might spring, but Solomon wants to “distance” himself “from ‘the rather dangerous nostalgia for ‘tradition’ and ‘community’ [of] Alasdair MacIntyre and Charles Taylor among others.’” Corporations are pluralist, like the wider culture; but unlike wider culture, they share a *telos*.⁷¹⁴ Thus they are amenable to an Aristotelian ethic, offered as an antidote to the individualistic, negating deontology (‘thou shalt not’) of Judeo-Christian virtue.⁷¹⁵

Likewise, for Nussbaum, Aristotle offers a way toward some centrally human “grounding experiences” of human need and capability, and a “universalist” liberal ethic based upon them.⁷¹⁶ Elsewhere these “grounding experiences” are listed as eight spheres of human life that are unavoidable “so long as one is living a human life”,⁷¹⁷ to which various virtues correspond. As we saw, these generate rival answers involving cultural variation and prejudice;⁷¹⁸ nevertheless, she hopes that debate might produce a virtue-system to which rational persons can agree.

c) *The implicit moral field*

I will now outline four criticisms of Solomon’s and Nussbaum’s appropriation of Aristotle. The criticisms are interesting in their own right, but serve finally to show that modern virtue theory is indeed reliant upon ‘something more’—a conception of an ordered moral field that elicits our loves. (This conception remains implicit in various virtue theories.)

1. We could examine (but will not do so here) the inner coherence of seeking for Aristotelian virtue whilst drawing heavily upon Nietzsche. The former is used for social ethics, and the latter for personal ethics; but to what extent is each inimical to the other? Perhaps the synthesis is defensibly coherent, but only by heavily scything both thinkers, and whatever *principles* govern this scything, need to be made overt.
2. The approach is not clear about how emotional consonance becomes partly constitutive of virtue’s intentions. But perhaps we came closest to seeing how this proceeds when Nussbaum’s ascents of love finally become an enjoyment of everyday life.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid., 212-13.

⁷¹⁵ Ibid., 220-21.

⁷¹⁶ Nussbaum, “Comparing,” 353-55, for this and quotations following.

⁷¹⁷ Roberts, “Emotions Among the Virtues,” 63, citing Martha C. Nussbaum, “Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach,” in *Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*, eds Peter A. French, et al., *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, vol. 13 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 36.

⁷¹⁸ Nussbaum’s logic about these cultural variations was outlined above (34). It is also found in her earlier work according to the summary of it by Roberts, “Emotions Among the Virtues,” 63.

3. When for Solomon business ‘toughness’ is a “legitimate part of a certain kind of obviously legitimate activity”,⁷¹⁹ we might wish to know how legitimacy, kinds and obviousness are generated by virtue. Either virtue must self-referentially generate these, as if discovery of the virtues of this (business) community can make its community virtuous; or, by sleight of hand, a prior moral ontology is at work.
4. The ‘replacement’ thesis gives an ‘epistemological priority’ to virtue, which many suspect is impossible.⁷²⁰

These criticisms are based upon the same objection as theological ethics makes when it disagrees with secular virtue ethics. When virtue theory thinks it is replacing the deontic, the opponent replies that virtue is either being generated from a vacuum, as it were, or is covertly trading upon existing moral capital. Indeed, Statman notes that “even the replacement version does not eliminate *all* non-aretaic concepts”⁷²¹ since the good of others in a community seems to require a wider moral order. Hursthouse emphasises the point:

[V]irtue theory is not committed to ... defining all of our moral concepts in terms of the virtuous agent. ... Charity or benevolence, for instance, is the virtue whose concern is the *good* of others; that concept of *good* is related to the concept of *evil* or *harm*, and they are both related to the concepts of the *worthwhile*, the *advantageous* and the *pleasant*.⁷²²

Thus “emotions involve ideas, or thoughts, or perceptions of ‘good and evil’”, and any similarity here to the theological position we have espoused is underlined by Hursthouse’s appeal to Aquinas for “discriminating detail” and “a plausible and illuminating thesis” on the matter.⁷²³ *Despite the protestations of some of its theorists, virtue theory certainly requires ‘something more’ than virtue, and should understand itself to be making judgments about a real moral order external to the self*, even if it is reticent to form these judgments into rules or principles.

Thus concerning abortion, to think the killing insignificant would be:

callous and light-minded, the sort of thing that no virtuous person and wise person would do. It is to have the wrong attitude not only to foetuses, but

⁷¹⁹ Solomon, “Corporate Roles,” 222.

⁷²⁰ Cf. O’Donovan, *Resurrection*, 211 on Hauerwas. This is also general thrust in Bernard A.O. Williams, “Virtues and Vices,” in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig, 10 vols., vol. 9 (London: Routledge, 1998), passim: virtue cannot itself serve as the foundation of an ethical theory.

⁷²¹ Statman, 9.

⁷²² Rosalind Hursthouse, “Virtue Theory and Abortion,” in *Virtue Ethics*, ed. Daniel Statman, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 230.

⁷²³ Hursthouse, “Virtue Ethics,” 111 & 116 n.25; she cites the *Summa* 1a2æ.22-30 and 2a2æ passim.

more generally to human life and death, parenthood, and family relationships.⁷²⁴

For others in situations of perhaps justifiable abortion, such as the Victorian women who hauled coal through tunnels, the need is also to recognise that “something is terribly amiss in the conditions of their lives, which make it so hard to recognise pregnancy and childbearing as the good they should be” and “which [make] it impossible for them to live really well.”⁷²⁵ Hursthouse evidentially conceives of a moral field comprising manifold, sometimes conflicting goods,⁷²⁶ which elicits recognition and emotional responses from us.

d) Virtue and the divine command

Against neo-Aristotelians, then, we can now reply that their dispute with Christian ethics is not as much to do with divine command deontology as they suppose. The ethics of Christian theology sees no discontinuity between the ‘law’ of the ‘lawgiver’ and a proper account of humanity *qua* humanity. Anscombe’s conception of a Christian ethics reliant upon a theory of divine command is not properly Christian.

It is perhaps worth pausing to offer a Christian account of the divine command. For O’Donovan, the divine command is not an adequate organising principle for a Christian ethic,⁷²⁷ although to say so “is not intended as a repudiation of the notion of divine command, which is deeply embedded in biblical ethics.”⁷²⁸

O’Donovan argues against accounts where the divine command functions as some kind of ‘stepping-stone’ between theological knowledge and action. The place of command “is not indispensable to an intelligible sequence of thought moving from revelation to ethics”,⁷²⁹ for divine command theories along these lines fail to take into account that human goods are pluriform aspects of generic and telic order, to which love represents a conformity, and into which rules offer epistemic access. “A command cannot evoke rational obedience unless it discloses some aspect of morality.”⁷³⁰ Hence the divine commands of the Bible are, in a

⁷²⁴ Hursthouse, “Virtue Theory,” 236.

⁷²⁵ Ibid., 238.

⁷²⁶ Cf. “we are, after all, in the happy position of there being more worthwhile things to do than can be fitted into one lifetime.” Ibid., 239.

⁷²⁷ Cf. O’Donovan, “Augustinian Ethics”.

⁷²⁸ Oliver M.T. O’Donovan, “How Can Theology Be Moral?,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 17 no. 2 (1989), 85.

⁷²⁹ Ibid.

⁷³⁰ Ibid., 88.

sense, revelatory: “they were not, when they were first given, arbitrary expressions of a naked will, unrelated to the Gospel, but were always expressions of the Gospel”.⁷³¹

Christian theology asserts, then, that divine commands are intelligible in the light of other divine words of revelation about God and about the world. (“Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart”, Ps. 119:34.) An important aspect of divine commands is to offer ‘limit’ or ‘boundary conditions’ for life, within which are areas of ‘freedom’, ‘wisdom’ and ‘understanding’, for which other kinds of moral language are required.⁷³² Thus there has never been any fundamental contradiction between Christian theology, its interest in divine commands, and an ethic of virtue. The error of deontology, whether Christian or otherwise, is to ignore or even suppress the wider moral order, known by ‘understanding’, that is named and borne witness to by (say) the Decalogue.

Such an approach to the divine command has not figured highly among interested commentators. In a collection that proceeds in the thin manner of analytic philosophy, few of the contributors consult a theologian.⁷³³ Indeed the collection highlights this form of philosophy as unconcerned with the formation of character, and as not interested in providing any logic of love. But if a thesis anything like my own is correct, no discussion of divine command as understood by Christian theology can proceed without such a logic, which is deeply interested in the formation of character.

In a more recent treatment, Richard Mouw briefly endorses something like my suggestion when he observes that “narrative is basic to biblical morality” and that God’s commands derive their intelligibility from biblical narrative, which in turn assists us to discover God’s character and intention in giving commands. He asserts that neither God’s commands nor our obedient actions should be considered a series of “disconnected” entities; rather, the commands are “intimately connected to a concern for developing moral character”.⁷³⁴ Mouw bases much of this, with acknowledgement, upon Calvin:

God has so depicted his character in the law that if any man carries out in deeds whatever is enjoined there, he will express the image of God, as it were, in his own life. ... Now the perfection of that holiness comes under [the two great commandments]. It would, therefore, be a mistake for anyone to believe that the law teaches nothing but some rudiments and preliminaries ... and does not also guide them to the true goal, good works ... From this is confirmed that interpretation of the law which seeks and finds in the

⁷³¹ Ibid., 89.

⁷³² Cf. also MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 139-41.

⁷³³ Paul Helm, ed. *Divine Commands and Morality*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981). Helm’s introduction is the exception.

⁷³⁴ Richard J. Mouw, *The God Who Commands* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 129.

commandments of the law all the duties of piety and love. For those who follow only dry and bare rudiments ... do not at all understand its purpose ...⁷³⁵

The “bare rudiments” are clearly a deontic conception of commands. Calvin’s conception relies upon a logic of love, and is teleological. The commands are, therefore, part of a wider account of reality, and he would agree with O’Donovan that divine command alone is not an adequate organising principle for a Christian ethic.

Virtue theory might object to the possibility of divine commands as revelatory and as ‘boundary conditions’, but that is a disagreement about what constitutes moral order rather than with rules *per se*. Given the acceptance of a realist moral ontology, rules need not be as inimical to virtue theory as is often supposed. Indeed, when Hursthouse uses the young to show, with Aristotle, that the young lack wisdom,⁷³⁶ we might wonder why so many young are at first reliant upon rules for moral formation. By analogy, people new to Christianity often orient themselves by reference to rules; yet over time, their common experience is that realities governed by these rules come to seem self-evident, commanding their deepest allegiance and affection (in the manner of the Psalmist, who thinks of honey). The rule has, in a sense, become redundant, which is not to say unimportant.

3. *An old coherence*

[T]his is my prayer, that your love [ἀγάπη] may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight [ἐπιγνώσει καὶ πάσῃ αἰσθήσει] to help you to determine what is best [εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τὰ διαφέροντα], so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless [εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι], having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. (Phil. 1:9-11, *NRSV*.)

Deontology alone cannot make St Paul’s prayer intelligible. A new seeing brings a virtuous life, somehow contingent upon ἀγάπη, conditional upon Christ and ordered to “the glory and praise of God”. For the theologians we have seen, virtue is predicated upon this logic. Christian virtues are constituted in, then derivative of, the ‘leap’ of love; and “emotions play an especially central role” in them, since some are named after emotions, others govern disordered affection, and yet others (such as humility) are “complex emotional disposition[s]”.⁷³⁷ Subsistent to this distinctiveness is Christianity’s unique structure as

response ... to a news-narrative which, if accepted ... will elicit a range of emotional responses [and which] centers on a personal relationship: it is news

⁷³⁵ Calvin, 415-16, II.viii.51.

⁷³⁶ Hursthouse, “Virtue Theory,” 232.

⁷³⁷ Roberts, “Emotions Among the Virtues,” 37, 60 & *passim*.

about reconciliation, forgiveness, and a new community—the kingdom of God.⁷³⁸

This is the manner in which emotions are intrinsic to Aelred’s friendship, where “reason is joined to affection, so that love is pure because it comes from reason, and agreeable because it comes from affection”,⁷³⁹ with allegiance to the person of Christ bringing order and virtue to friendship. This ‘logic of love’ will come into further focus by revision and expansion of what we have seen so far.

In this section, then, I will begin to organise and extend insights about virtue that have been glimpsed throughout Part Two. Aquinas’ virtue produces ordinate passion and requires love for its intelligibility. Augustine’s virtues are teleological. Virtue in Calvin and Augustine seems to function as statements of *aim*, and perhaps of *affirmation given and received*—but not of *self-description*, which can inveigle agents from proper scrutiny of their acts. The logic of love governs all of these approaches.

a) Augustine

We saw Augustine in sustained dialogue with the classical tradition, at first modifying it, and later radically questioning aspects of it. The broad point of agreement among ancients was that “the mind is master of all [emotional] disturbances, and, by withholding its consent from them and resisting them, exercises a reign of virtue.”⁷⁴⁰ Even the more philosophically oriented early Augustine attempts a ‘leap’-like emphasis toward love’s all-embracing claim, away from classical confidence in the ability of the virtuous human agent, in a ‘christianised’ account of the four classical virtues, where each was an aspect of the ‘greatest commandment’ to love God.⁷⁴¹ This emphasis is amplified through Augustine’s career: virtue cannot properly be understood as an end in itself, and rather requires a certain primary kind of love directed elsewhere.

[T]he man of true godliness, who loves, believes and hopes in God, attends more to those things in himself which displease him rather than to those, if there are any, which are pleasing to him or, rather, to the Truth. Nor does he attribute what is now pleasing to him to anything other than the mercy of Him Whom he fears to displease. To Him he gives thanks for what is healed in him, and pours out his prayers for those things which are as yet unhealed.⁷⁴²

⁷³⁸ Ibid., 42.

⁷³⁹ See above, 232.

⁷⁴⁰ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 365 (IX.5); see above, 81.

⁷⁴¹ Augustine, *De mor. ecc. cath.*, 48 (§15). See above, 110.

⁷⁴² Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 227 (V.20).

In agreement with the tradition this reign of virtue is a hallmark of true humanity, and virtue (in league with truth—*veritate atque virtute*⁷⁴³) contends with passion for the affections. But emphatically and explicitly unlike the tradition, something ‘leap’-like—signified here in the ‘incorporeal embrace’—is needed for their *proper* formation:

For our good, concerning the nature of which there has been such contention among the philosophers, is nothing other than to cling to Him, by Whose incorporeal embrace alone the intellectual soul is, if one may so put it, filled up and impregnated with true virtues.⁷⁴⁴

Augustine proceeds to show that virtue must be understood as an affective, teleological expression of the command to love God and neighbour. Otherwise, virtue becomes a Pelagian vice: “If only you had known him; if only you had entrusted yourself to him for healing, rather than to your own virtue which, being human, is fragile and infirm”.⁷⁴⁵ The movement away from the classical tradition is complete when the four classical virtues are shrewdly used to highlight life’s decrepitude.⁷⁴⁶

Or almost complete. *Contra Julianum*, like all the anti-Pelagian works, will finally throw the issues into the very starkest relief. In Augustine’s handy five-point summary of the points at issue,⁷⁴⁷ discussion about virtue derives from the fifth point, concerning ‘natural faults’. Julian, sympathetic to Aristotelian and Ciceronian accounts of virtue, seeks to show that virtue inheres naturally in all, since whatever ought to be done can be done.

But “[t]his is rather to be asked of the Lord than presumed of our own strength, that not human virtue but divine grace may establish harmony between flesh and spirit”.⁷⁴⁸ Classical natural virtue is assailed by 1 John 1:8 (“if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us”), and Matthew 6:12 (“forgive us our debts”). Therefore, “we rely on the true mercy of God; you, on your own false virtue.”⁷⁴⁹ Nonetheless, “all covetings must be restrained with every force of virtue according to the grace of God which is given to men.” Augustine neither wages war on virtue nor sows despair among those seeking to combat personal vice. “I do not say the forces of lust are so great that human

⁷⁴³ See above, 80.

⁷⁴⁴ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 395 (X.3).

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid., 432 (X.27). The quotation is not specifically targeting Pelagians, but is of a piece with later attacks upon them.

⁷⁴⁶ See above, 91.

⁷⁴⁷ Augustine, *Against Julian* (421), tr. M.A. Schumacher, (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc, 1957), 92-93 (II.9 §31).

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid., 63 (II.3 §6). Cf. 149 (III.21 §47).

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid., 149 (III.21 §47).

reason, divinely helped and aroused, cannot rule and restrain it.”⁷⁵⁰ The effect, rather, is to show that Augustine differs with Julian over virtue’s grounds, content, manner of unity, and mode of inherence in a person.⁷⁵¹

The argument culminates in a major critique.⁷⁵² To carry the claim that virtue is a natural human ‘affection’ inherent in all, Julian must construe moral failure merely as a variance in relative *effectiveness* of virtue.⁷⁵³ But if so, says Augustine, misers are virtuous since “it is well known to what great efforts and pains lovers of money will patently subject themselves,” displaying at least courage, prudence, temperance and wisdom in the pursuit.⁷⁵⁴ Julian’s defence, that the miser’s virtues are only defective in the tragic lack of their result (earthly treasure, rather than heavenly reward), will not do for Augustine. Julian overlooks the way virtue and vice are not always antitheses, but are often alarmingly similar. Next to constancy is stubbornness; next to prudence is cleverness. Without the ‘leap’, disorder in sight and appetite makes virtue indistinguishable from vice. How then should virtues be distinguished? “[N]ot”, as with Julian, “by their functions, but by their ends.” “God forbid that true virtues serve anyone but Him to whom we say: ‘Lord of virtues, convert us.’”⁷⁵⁵

Virtue, then, is fundamentally teleological, and the ‘leap’ necessary for what Augustine will allow as Christian virtue is clear. Admittedly, in this particular treatment the affectational aspect of virtue seems less clear,⁷⁵⁶ since Augustine’s criterion of judgment is that the subject has faith in Christ. We might surmise that Augustine would not distinguish between ‘faith in’ and ‘love for’ Christ; which proves resoundingly to be the case when Augustine closes the discussion.⁷⁵⁷

Augustine seems to accept virtue along the same lines as were suggested for Calvin.⁷⁵⁸ Instruction primarily proceeds from God’s call upon people to love himself and to embrace others in joy, and virtue is a derivative element of that call. Hence virtues can effectively describe a manner of life toward which one might *aim*, and are useful for *affirmations given*

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid., 164 (III.26 §65).

⁷⁵¹ The four categories are from Williams, 627.

⁷⁵² Augustine, *Cont. Jul.*, 176-199 (IV.3).

⁷⁵³ “All virtues are affections through which we are good either effectively or ineffectively”, in Augustine’s paraphrase. (Ibid., 187.)

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid., 183.

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid., 186, 187.

⁷⁵⁶ Ironically, it is at first clearer in Julian’s “[a]ll virtues are affections ...” (above, 243 n.753).

⁷⁵⁷ Augustine, *Cont. Jul.*, 198.

⁷⁵⁸ See above, ‘A way to humble virtue’, 186f.

and received concerning character and behaviour, but are not primarily for *self-description*. Understood in this light, the language of virtue can assist me to discern my character and behaviour, and perhaps to celebrate the work of God, but without inveigling me from the primary call to attend to others (as the introspection associated with self-descriptive virtue might do).

One of O'Donovan's more surprising points about an ethic of character is that "by condemning us it drives us to seek the grace of God."⁷⁵⁹ Perhaps this claim requires the view of virtue I have espoused here, since on this view, the subject is better placed to scrutinise his acts. Despite the dispositional element of virtue, there is a sense in which I am only as 'friendly' or 'patient' or 'generous' as my last friendly etc. (or unfriendly etc.) moment. However any such realisations will tend to be hindered where virtue is regularly used self-descriptively.

Meilaender has likewise shown how an account of virtue might cohere with Luther's anti-Pelagian concerns.⁷⁶⁰ Briefly, Christians inculcate the virtues in a kind of salvific 'safety net', where the focus is not upon the self, nor upon 'possession' of virtue or self-mastery. Instead, such a 'safety net' emphasises "the Word which announces that the end of the story is present now in hope—the Word which makes present the grace of One who sees us whole and has both the authority and power to transform character and shape souls."⁷⁶¹ Leap-like virtue can do this; Augustine's point was that 'natural' virtue cannot.

b) Aquinas?

Aquinas' engagement with virtue might seem single-handedly to commit Christian theology to a view that the natural 'cardinal' virtues remain largely undisputed, that religious and secular difference remains over the three theological virtues only, and that beyond this, moderns only need to rediscover and fine-tune an Aristotelian consensus. Perhaps MacIntyre, by championing and refining *Aquinas'* synthesis⁷⁶² in response to Anscombe's call for an *Aristotelian* renaissance, might seem to confirm that Aquinas simply represents the fine tuning of an Aristotelian consensus.

⁷⁵⁹ O'Donovan, *Resurrection*, 225.

⁷⁶⁰ Meilaender, 100-26.

⁷⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁷⁶² MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 53 & passim.

But such a conclusion would represent a serious misunderstanding of MacIntyre (whose position has shifted since *After Virtue*), and a deep misunderstanding Aquinas, whose thought is not just a reworked Aristotelianism. MacIntyre describes Aquinas' project:

Augustinianism and the Aristotelianism of the Islamic commentators were systematically at odds [and] no rational way could be found to settle the differences between them. ... Aquinas decisively showed this conclusion to be false ...⁷⁶³

The matter of whether Aquinas' thought is merely a reworked Aristotelianism hinges on whatever the 'rational' nexus between Augustine and Aristotle turns out to be. As it happens, MacIntyre knows that Aquinas' virtue is based on an affectational 'leap', even if Aquinas did not describe the 'leap' very dramatically.

Charity is the form of all virtue; without charity the virtues would lack the specific kind of directedness they require. And charity is not to be acquired by moral education; it is a gift of grace, flowing from the work of Christ through the office of the Holy Spirit [*Summa* 2a2æ.23-44].⁷⁶⁴

Christian virtue is decisively shaped by love, therefore it is no mere development of, nor a footnote to, Aristotle's virtue.⁷⁶⁵ Moreover, MacIntyre notices an Augustinian tenet, retained by Aquinas in the *Summa* and championed by MacIntyre as necessary for moderns:⁷⁶⁶ that texts interrogate readers and form communities of readership who are fit to read texts aright. At the outset, readers inculcate "certain attitudes and dispositions, certain virtues"⁷⁶⁷ before knowing why they are so, in a "prerational reordering of the self" required before there exists adequate criteria of judgment over what constitutes good moral reasoning. "The key texts were of course those of sacred Scripture", and "like any learner within a craft-tradition", the learner begins with a degree of trust in the formative tradition and in the teachers' competency to express it.

The learner needs to discover "how to order the passions so that they may serve and not distract reason in its pursuit of the specific end, the good."⁷⁶⁸ To order passion in this way entails an understanding of the relationships between passions, reason and will, and this understanding includes a growing awareness of "the different dispositions to judge and act which exhibit a right ordering of the passions." When these dispositions are properly possessed, they are "the distinctively human perfections, the virtues."

⁷⁶³ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 173.

⁷⁶⁴ MacIntyre, *Whose Justice*, 205.

⁷⁶⁵ Cf. the quotation from MacIntyre which began Chapter IV, above, 75.

⁷⁶⁶ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 130, 226-7, 235-6.

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid., 82-3, and for quotations following.

⁷⁶⁸ Ibid., 139, and for quotations following.

When the learner involves himself in the Scripture-reading community, undergoes an affectational leap, and orders his passion into virtuous dispositions, implications follow for theological morality. *Rules* are simply a subset of the overall approach. They set limits that only partly define the good, and are incomplete when abstracted from their community setting.⁷⁶⁹ The *acknowledgement of sin* “is a necessary condition for one’s acceptance of the virtues of faith, hope, and charity”—which, in turn, are requisite to “provide the other virtues with what they need to become genuine excellences”.⁷⁷⁰ God’s *self-revelation and grace* enables people to recognise the genuineness of the classical virtues and the correlative necessity for correction of the moral life.

“So a Pauline and Augustinian account retrospectively vindicates that in Aristotle which had provided a first understanding of the moral life.” To summarise,

In the best accounts of the virtues to be given so far, inadequacies are remedied by using the Bible and Augustine to transcend the limitations not only of Aristotle but also of Plato ... and by using Aristotle as well as Augustine to articulate some of the detail of the moral life in a way that goes beyond anything furnished by Augustine.⁷⁷¹

Elsewhere MacIntyre draws out Aquinas’ ability to make sense of the moral field in highly discriminating detail, but from within *indispensable* commitments to reverence and love for God, and *where even justice requires charity*.⁷⁷² Space forbids our recounting his “bare catalogue” of Aquinas.⁷⁷³ The point here is that neither MacIntyre nor Aquinas supports the suggestion that Aristotle has somehow swept the field, with no new word from Christianity. Rather, for Aquinas (and MacIntyre), an affectational leap of love decisively orders passion and forms virtue.

To augment MacIntyre’s exposition of Aquinas on virtue, I will now briefly summarise the discoveries about virtue made in my own investigation of Aquinas.

Intellectual virtue assists the subject to target right ends, and moral virtue assists his passions to attain right ends.⁷⁷⁴ Lively discussion follows over how various virtues might supervise various passions, and although ‘distilled’ into the four cardinal virtues, there

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid.; cf. MacIntyre, *Whose Justice*, 194-96, where this is put more fully.

⁷⁷⁰ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 140.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid., 140-41.

⁷⁷² MacIntyre, *Whose Justice*, 183-208.

⁷⁷³ Ibid., 202.

⁷⁷⁴ See above, 150.

remains a flexibility in imagining what kind of virtue might govern a given passion⁷⁷⁵ (and later, given situations.⁷⁷⁶) Aquinas' grand view is of the command of reason's governance under God, and in concert with virtues that amplify ordered passions. Thus the agent is powerfully propelled toward the very best goods of life. The theological virtues 'lock' development of virtue into a 'net' that relies on God's graceful agency. The "something more" in Aquinas' Christian virtue is the 'leap' being lived. *Phronesis* alone will not suffice.

c) Calvin

The extraordinary moral depths at which Calvin places humanity might make him a kind of 'acid test' for the validity of virtue. Of all people, we might expect him to be one of those "ideological heirs" of Luther who (according to MacIntyre) strip Aristotle from Thomas, "leav[ing] the despair of moral achievement and the gratuitousness of grace" which renders virtue, and by extension the moral life, unintelligible.⁷⁷⁷ Indeed, the paucity of virtue's appearance in the material we have surveyed, and Calvin's unrelenting Augustinian suspicion of it in its natural occurrence, does not bode well.

Yet when expounding the Christian life, Calvin airily directs readers to homilies of the fathers for "exhortations" and "[description of] individual virtues at length".⁷⁷⁸ This hardly need be a light use of 'virtue', as if Calvin was distracted into a slip of the pen. Better rather to say that *unlike* the *Summa*, Calvin's *Institutes* is not a work that is primarily concerned to explicate virtue. Yet Calvin agrees with the Augustinian expectation of virtue springing from a renewed love of Christ and an understanding of right ends. Certainly nothing in 'Life of a Christian Man' disagrees with the wider vision of reordered affections that we are now familiar with. Calvin rejected mere "perform[ance of] all the duties of love" and enjoined a fulfilment of them "from a sincere feeling of love" (III.vii.7).⁷⁷⁹ This is the same 'leap'-like revolution of the moral life.

Calvin knows that the most important part of creating virtuous *people* is the laying out of a *moral field*, rather than focusing upon virtue itself (which is the *practice* of taking that field seriously over time).⁷⁸⁰

⁷⁷⁵ See above, 152.

⁷⁷⁶ MacIntyre, *Whose Justice*, 195-96.

⁷⁷⁷ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 141.

⁷⁷⁸ See above, 185.

⁷⁷⁹ See above, 186.

⁷⁸⁰ My thanks to Brian Brock for this insight.

4. *The emotions of Christian virtue*

In this section I will adjust the theological discoveries of the previous section by associating a modern analysis of Christian virtue with NT ‘virtue catalogues’. The NT catalogues offer a nuanced descriptive language for various correspondences between an agent’s affections and the order of reality, thereby providing, firstly, a language brief enough for quick deliberation (even if subsequently, the act proves erroneous). Secondly, this language does not direct specific acts, offering instead a degree of creative freedom to ‘invent’ action most befitting specific loved others. Thirdly, Christian communities become places for participants to learn by craft-skill, and from careful evaluations of them by others. I suggest, by way of postscript, how conscience becomes intelligible not as a basis for *deliberation*, but as a window for *reflection* on my (perhaps disordered) loves.

a) NT lists: general

When Burton Easton collated the so-called virtue- and vice-lists of the NT,⁷⁸¹ stylistic similarities between these and other ancient-world lists were thought more interesting than their differing grounds and content. But the eleven virtue-catalogues and seventeen vice-catalogues represent lives that derive from the Christian proclamation.

The more extensive vice-catalogue might suggest a deontological supremacy, since it is almost entirely *action-specific* (albeit with some highly localised actions, such as matricide). But in contrast stands the almost entirely *attitudinal* virtue-catalogue. The overall presentation is of vice as ‘boundary condition’, with virtues doing a more daily moral work that promotes moral freedom and creativity (since action-specific behaviours to achieve, are few). Innovative, practical expressions of virtuous attitudes invite the interest of virtuous people, who ‘invent’ ways to live these attitudes, as appropriate to their own place amongst telic and generic order (their ‘vocation’). Calvin notices the difference between this and philosophical taxonomy:

As philosophers have fixed limits of the right and the honorable, whence they derive individual duties and the whole company of virtues, so Scripture is not without its own order in this matter, but holds to a most beautiful dispensation, and one much more certain than all the philosophical ones. The only difference is that they, as they were ambitious men, diligently strove to attain an exquisite clarity of order to show the nimbleness of their wit. But the Spirit of God, because he taught without affectation, did not adhere so exactly or continuously to a methodical plan; yet when he lays one down anywhere he hints enough that it is not to be neglected by us. (*Inst.* III.vi.1)

⁷⁸¹ Burton S. Easton, “New Testament Ethical Lists,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 51 (1932). The lists are Mk 7:21-22; Rom. 1:29-31; 1 Cor. 5:9-11 & 6:9-10; 2 Cor. 6:6-7; Gal. 5:19-23; Eph. 4:31, 5:3-5 & 6:14-17; Phil. 4:8; Col. 3:5, 3:8 & 3:12-14; 1 Tim. 1:9-10, 3:2-3, 6:4-5 & 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:2-4; Ti. 1:7-8 & 3:1-2; Jas 3:17; 1 Pt. 4:3; 2 Pt. 1:5-8; Rev. 21:8 & 22:15. I shall attempt to group the virtue terms given there in the footnotes that follow.

Grouping these NT virtues offers insights about the moral order of Christian theology. (In proceeding this way, I risk the apoplexy of Bible scholars. I will touch upon their concerns shortly.⁷⁸²) This grouping can be amalgamated with a classification offered by Robert C. Roberts, who is interested in the richly emotional nature of Christian virtue.

b) Roberts' classification

Roberts begins by noting just how amenable to moral language are the emotions themselves. They regularly take moral predicates; they produce actions; they include impulses that are adverse to moral life; they reflect deep concerns of the subject; they carry 'cultural content', which is to say that their constructions reflect the tradition in which the subject stands; and their presence in perception make them constitutive to wisdom's discernment.⁷⁸³ Finally, and perhaps surprisingly, the degree to which they *resist* our control reflects a unique aspect of human morality: serendipitous attraction and repulsion by various concerns augurs better for an account of character, than does some conception of "a pure agent ... who acts but never re-acts". Human agency "takes, in large part, the form of emotions."⁷⁸⁴ (This recalls our point of basic agreement with Nietzsche.)

Virtues do have generic similarity, else diverse traditions would not share similarly named virtues; however, this does not imply nor require that there are generic virtues.⁷⁸⁵ Although emotions are episodic and virtues dispositional, the amenability of emotions to moral language forms part of the generic features in virtue. (Interestingly, this conclusion matches Williams' analysis. Despite the fourfold basis of difference between virtue-theories,⁷⁸⁶ there can be thin agreement over the genera of virtues—that they are "dispositions of character, acquired by ethical training, displayed not just in action but in patterns of emotional reaction" and "are not rigid habits, but are flexible under the application of practical reason."⁷⁸⁷ The thin agreement is what commences the quest, largely misguided, for a set of *per se* natural and universal virtues.)

Roberts loosely groups Christian virtue as **supervening, emotional, behavioural, self-managerial, and attitudinal**. Emotion is variously implicated in these categories.

⁷⁸² See below, 252.

⁷⁸³ Roberts, "Emotions Among the Virtues," 38-40.

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid., 40.

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid., 37-38.

⁷⁸⁶ See above, 243 & n.751.

⁷⁸⁷ Williams, 627.

Roberts acknowledges **supervening** concepts, such as NT love, which is neither a distinct emotion nor a distinct virtue but is rather “a kind of summary term for virtually the whole range of proper attitudes and action dispositions with respect to God and neighbour” (to which 1 Cor. 13 bears witness)⁷⁸⁸—paralleling the observation made elsewhere that “[l]ove is the unitary orientation that lies behind all the uniquely varied responses to the generic variety of the created order.”⁷⁸⁹ This is the mode in which Christian virtue is unified, reflecting a substantial difference from classical versions of unity.

Roberts does not consider other overarching terms for ‘goodness’.⁷⁹⁰ These most general descriptors are ‘coloured’ by the content of the other terms, as in any ethical system. But conversely, another group of terms shows the unique manner in which divine relationship is integral to the conception of virtue.⁷⁹¹

Central to Christian logic are **emotional** responses to a divine approach.⁷⁹² Joy, hope, gratitude, peace and contrition are emotional dispositions to the approach, and conspicuously, these virtues are named after those emotions.⁷⁹³ To describe something like ‘joy’ as ‘Christian’ is to specify its distinctive Christian object(s).⁷⁹⁴ Roberts notes how these are exemplified in this order in various ways, such as when emotional responses to local circumstances (e.g. grief, anxiety, sorrow) are conditioned by them, or when puzzling differences emerge between Christian and secular emotional response (e.g. joy in suffering). His logic precisely parallels Augustine,⁷⁹⁵ just as he echoes Aquinas in noticing how negative emotions are derivative of the valuations implicit in the positive (“anger at

⁷⁸⁸ Roberts, “Emotions Among the Virtues,” 43. Cf. ἀγάπη (Gal. 5:22; 2 Cor. 6:6; Col. 3:14; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Pt. 1:7).

⁷⁸⁹ O’Donovan, *Resurrection*, 223-24.

⁷⁹⁰ In the lists, there are: δικαιοσύνη, righteousness (2 Cor 6:7; Eph. 6:14; 1 Tim. 6:11); ἀγνός, pure, purity (Phil. 4:8; Jas 3:17; 2 Cor. 6:6); ὅσιος, devout, holy (Ti. 1:8); ἀνεπίλημπτος, above reproach (1 Tim. 3:2); ἀνέγκλητος, blameless (Ti. 1:7); ἔπαινος, praiseworthy; εὐφημος, admirable, commendable; προσφιλής, pleasing; σεμνός, honourable, noble (all Phil. 4:8).

⁷⁹¹ In the lists, there are: εὐσέβεια, godliness (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Pt. 1:6); δυνάμει θεοῦ, power of God (2 Cor. 6:7); πνεύματι ἁγίῳ, ‘in the Holy Spirit’ (or, ‘in holiness of spirit’?) (2 Cor. 6:6); γνῶσις, knowledge, understanding (primarily of doctrine) (2 Pt. 1:5; 2 Cor. 6:6). Possibly ambiguous is πίστις, faith, faithfulness (2 Pt. 1:5; Eph. 6:16; Gal. 5:22; 1 Tim. 6:11), which obviously refers to trust in God, but which also picks up the sense of trust or loyalty in human relationships.

⁷⁹² See above, 240.

⁷⁹³ Roberts, “Emotions Among the Virtues,” 44. In the lists, there are: χαρά, joy (Gal. 5:22); and εἰρήνη, peace, peaceable (Jas 3:17; Gal. 5:22; cf. Phil. 4:7,9). These are the only ‘emotion’ terms to occur in the virtue lists! This of course only shows the inadequacy of restricting ourselves to these lists, since other terms of emotion are prolific in discussions that do not take a list form. ‘Peace’ is ambiguous, since it could be a ‘behavioural’ quality of relationships, not merely a free-standing emotion. But these different senses are so deeply interconnected as to defy arbitration between them.

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid., 49.

⁷⁹⁵ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 365 (IX.5) & 597 (XIV.9).

injustice to God's children presupposes the gospel [while also] directly ... a response to an injustice."⁷⁹⁶)

Dispositions such as kindness, hospitality, gentleness, peaceableness, justice, and truthfulness represent to Roberts a **behavioural** readiness to act in certain ways.⁷⁹⁷ Obviously enough, such behaviours logically derive from God's high estimate of other human beings. But mere *assent* to this will not suffice to make a *virtue*:

To be motivated in [this] special Christian way is not just to believe in God's kingdom, but to love it, to find it attractive, and thus to find its activities and members attractive ... to see, in a genuinely perceptual sense, that a person is worthy to receive benefits from oneself just for his own sake, and this concern-drenched vision is just what an emotion is, on my account.⁷⁹⁸

Meilaender has contrasted the corrective function of virtue, helping to control and direct our emotions, with its role as a restrainer of passion and an expression of new affection. The 'strenuous control' of 'continence' differs from the 'effortlessness' of 'temperance'.⁷⁹⁹ Likewise Roberts denotes a class of Christian **self-management** virtues (typified by patience, perseverance, and courage⁸⁰⁰) as 'virtues of will-power', which are not natural and must be learnt in the context of the moral tradition with which they are associated. In Christianity these are informed by other behavioural and emotional virtues, and by "the more general disposition to prize and seek God's kingdom in its various dimensions."⁸⁰¹ One problem here is conflict between 'selves'—with, we might imagine, a Nietzschean 'self' and an Augustinian 'self' presenting 'themselves' as equally viable. But "Christianity, as a moral orientation, offers rich guidelines for distinguishing the self that is to do the controlling from the one that needs to be controlled."⁸⁰²

⁷⁹⁶ Roberts, "Emotions Among the Virtues," 47.

⁷⁹⁷ In the lists, there are: ἀληθής, true, truthful (2 Cor. 6:7; Eph. 6:14; Phil. 4:8); ἀνεχόμενος, forbearance (Col. 3:13); ἀρετή, excellence, goodness (Phil. 4:8; 2 Pt. 1:5); χρηστότης, kindness (Gal. 5:22; Col. 3:12; 2 Cor. 6:6); δίκαιος, just, upright (Phil. 4:8; Ti. 1:8); ἀδιάκριτος, impartial (Jas 3:17); εἰρήνη, peace, peaceable (Jas 3:17; Gal. 5:22; cf. Phil. 4:7,9); ἐπιεικής, gentleness (1 Tim. 3:3; Ti. 3:2; Jas 3:17); πραΰτης [πραυπάθεια], gentleness, meekness (Gal. 5:23; Col. 3:12; [1 Tim. 6:11]; Ti. 3:2); φιλόξενος, hospitable (1 Tim. 3:2; Ti. 1:8); κόσμιος, respectable (1 Tim. 3:2); ἔτοιμος, ready (to proclaim or do good) (Eph. 6:15; Ti. 3:1); ὑποταγμένος, submissive (to authorities) (Ti. 3:1); πειθαρχήσας, obedient (Ti. 3:1); ἀγαθός, ἀγαθωσύνη, good, goodness (or generosity?) (Jas 3:17; Gal. 5:22).

⁷⁹⁸ Roberts, "Emotions Among the Virtues," 51.

⁷⁹⁹ Meilaender, 12.

⁸⁰⁰ In the lists, there is: ἐγκράτεια, self-control (Gal. 5:23; 2 Pt. 1:6; Tit. 1:8; cf. above, 177 n.541); μακροθυμία, patience (2 Cor. 6:6; Gal. 5:22; Col. 3:12); νηφάλιος, temperance (1 Tim. 3:2); ὑπομονή, endurance (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Pt. 1:6); σώφρων, sensible, prudent (1 Tim. 3:2; Ti. 1:8). 'Courage', infrequent in these lists, is well-represented elsewhere (e.g. the 'bold' speaking of Acts, Rom. and 2 Cor.); but a version of it is a vice in 2 Peter 2:10 where ὁ τολμητής is a reckless and audacious man.

⁸⁰¹ Roberts, "Emotions Among the Virtues," 55.

⁸⁰² Ibid., 65 n.18.

“For lack of a better name”, Roberts calls such virtues as humility, meekness, mercy, forbearance and forgiveness⁸⁰³ **attitudinal**, “because despite all the things that they are not, they are at least attitudes towards oneself and others.”⁸⁰⁴ Roberts’ disquiet in naming these is because they are “complex emotional disposition[s]” often concerned with how *not* to respond in a situation. His difficulty here is interesting, since it reflects the way in which these terms do a quite startling amount of moral work. They connote key aspects of Christian moral order. They bespeak ongoing emotional dispositions, and in this speaking, picture an ethically oriented form of affection. As such they name a highly discriminating mode of moral response.

We previously noted Callahan’s difficult “fully extended, fully inclusive, circular, parallel processing of the dynamic interplays of consciousness”.⁸⁰⁵ We have now seen the theological alternative. These virtue terms are a descriptive language for the confluence of an agent, his or her affections, and the order of reality—voiced in a supple, varied and creative language.⁸⁰⁶ Importantly, it is a *brief* language, which in the heated moment of decision offers a statement of *aim*.⁸⁰⁷ Subsequent act-evaluation may discern that the act was still in error (since virtue is not epistemically prior to act); but in the heuristics of deliberation, the attitudinal virtues do at least as much or more than “circular, parallel processing”.

c) NT lists: specific

Of course the Bible scholars’ apoplexy over my grouping of NT virtues is somewhat justified, since the occasion of each list is highly specific. Four examples must suffice:

- The list in Philippians 4:8 has always been of particular interest, with interpretations ranging from a Pauline affirmation of local secular virtue to the contemplation of abstract goods. A third reading is more plausible: that given the dispute of 4:2, warring

⁸⁰³ In the lists, there are: σπλάγχνα οίκτιρμου, ‘bowels of compassion’; ταπεινοφροσύνη, humility; χαριζόμενος, forgiveness (Col. 3:12-13); ἔλεος, mercy (Jas 3:17); εὐπειθής, willingness to yield (Jas 3:17); φιλαδελφία, mutual affection (2 Pt. 1:7); φιλόγαθος, lover of goodness (Ti. 1:8); πίστις, faith, faithfulness (see above, n.791) (2 Pt. 1:5; Eph. 6:16; Gal. 5:22; 1 Tim. 6:11).

⁸⁰⁴ Meilaender, 60.

⁸⁰⁵ See above, 13.

⁸⁰⁶ No attempt has been made to include in our classification every concept in the virtue lists. For completeness, they are: τὴν περικεφαλαίαν τοῦ σωτηρίου, “helmet of salvation”; and μάχαιραν τοῦ πνεύματος, ὃ ἐστὶν ῥῆμα θεοῦ, “sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (both a form of γνῶσις?) (both Eph. 6:17); μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα, “husband to one wife”; διδασκτικός, apt to teach (both 1 Tim. 3:2); and α-privative vices: ἄμαχος, not quarrelsome (1 Tim. 3:3 Ti. 3:2); ἀφιλάργυρος, not a money-lover (1 Tim. 3:3); ἀνυπόκριτος, not hypocritical (Jas 3:17); and βλασφημεῖν μηδένα, “to speak evil of no one” (Ti. 3:2). The use of these among the virtues indicate how the task is incomplete without the vice lists, which are beyond our scope.

⁸⁰⁷ See above, 243.

parties are exhorted to find ‘whatever’ of these excellences reside in the other, to the end of the ‘peace’ of vv7 and 9.⁸⁰⁸ This instantiates the evaluative use of virtue primarily in reference to others, rather than as a self-descriptor. (Likewise other applications of virtue language to the self are, as we have also suggested, often a statements of aim rather than of present status—Eph. 6; Col. 3; 2 Pt. 1; and possibly Ti. 3, and Jas 3.)

- It will seem odd to include qualities of Christian community leaders as per the Pastorals, since these are indeed tailored to a role-description. Nevertheless, if NT virtues promote a latitude for moral creativity, then in the logic of NT community, leaders model virtuous behaviour and thereby assist the unimaginative, in the manner of the taught ‘craft-skill’. Leaders are to provide a behavioural (and attitudinal?) template, beyond which the community might improvise (within the vice-list ‘boundary conditions’). Interestingly, the few behaviour-specific virtues (such as ‘hospitality’) appear in this connection. They will form part of an answer to bewildered questions (such as ‘how can I be kind?’).
- Other virtue lists seem specific to the difficulties of local addressees as sometimes revealed by the vice-lists addressed to them. Thus for example Galatians 5:22 is (in part) reciprocal to factional element of vv19-21, which in turn reflects the occasion of the letter. Thus while such lists contribute toward a wider NT profile, they are illustrative, with particular pastoral emphases, rather than exhaustive.
- Conversely, some lists elucidate a more global response to the Christian proclamation. Thus the ‘ladder’ of 2 Peter 1:5-7 is actually no such thing, since each term conceptually corresponds to the divine person and work of vv1-4. The ‘faith’ to be supported is already given (v1); ‘goodness’ (ἀρετή) parallels divine excellence (ἀρετή, v3); ‘knowledge’ increases that already given (v3); ‘self-control’ responds to the divine release from ‘corruption’ due to ‘lust’ (v4); ‘endurance’ is a response to promises (v4); ‘godliness’ reflects ‘participation’ in the divine nature’ (v4), and ‘mutual affection’ follows from the participants (κοινωνοὶ) being a group, not a monad. The ladder is in fact a mirror, a pattern of fitting response to divine reality.

Interestingly ἀγάπη—with no obvious correspondence to what precedes—seems rather to reflect its typically Christian role as “the unitary orientation” behind, in this case, a variety of responses that include self-control, endurance, knowledge and mutual affection. Again, the difference from classical versions of unity is substantial.

⁸⁰⁸ This was the subject of my unpublished M.Th. dissertation (*St Paul’s Ethic, with Special Reference to Philipians*)

However, these manifold ‘virtues’ are not yet distilled into overarching ‘natural’ or ‘theological’ virtues (with the exception of ἀγάπη). That they are consistent with a good, theocentric universe might make them distillable in principle. But in their variance, they subtly describe agents in various confluences of affection toward aspects of that reality. Each ‘virtue’ sparkles as a facet of the same diamond.

This virtue-catalogue is so centred (in a ‘leap’-like way) upon the good of others divine and human, that little is logically achievable without reference to others. Furthermore, a Christian creative task is the invention of behaviours appropriate to specific others. That is, creativity resides in the ‘person-specific’ aspect of the task: acts of ‘kindness’, for example, differ according to the recipient. In this respect, the virtue catalogue reflects a form of freedom, including its deontological boundary conditions; and communities become a place participants can learn by craft-skill, and where I might learn from the evaluation of others about me.

d) Conscience

If there is a logic of love such as this thesis describes, then conscience is conceptually integral to virtue. We notice, with emotivists, that ethical discourse is often in the nature of an emotional outburst. But against emotivism, we retain a ‘realist’ mood, and humbly seek to clarify what aspect of generic or telic order is being affirmed or pursued or protected or defended in the outburst. This was handled by Aquinas in the language of the ‘irascible’ and the ‘concupiscible’, which offer insights into defences or pursuits of the soul’s loves.⁸⁰⁹

Wherefore also the passions of the irascible appetite counteract the passions of the concupiscible appetite: since the concupiscence, on being aroused, diminishes anger; and anger being roused, diminishes concupiscence in many cases. This is clear also from the fact that the irascible is, as it were, the champion and defender of the concupiscible when it rises up against what hinders the acquisition of the suitable things which the concupiscible desires, or against what inflicts harm, from which the concupiscible flies. And for this reason all the passions of the irascible appetite rise from the passions of the concupiscible appetite and terminate in them; for instance, anger rises from sadness, and having wrought vengeance, terminates in joy. For this reason also the quarrels of animals are about things concupiscible—namely, food and sex ... (*Summa* 1a.81.2)

Some modern counselling theory has arrived at a similar conclusion, and goes about its task by the suspension of evaluative judgments and advice-giving, and seeks with a client to determine those ‘loves’ to which a negative emotion might pertain. Thus sadness or grief might be a lost ‘love’; helplessness the agent’s inability to protect something loved; hopelessness the inability to attain something loved; despair all loves denied. In such

4:8 [Sydney: Australian College of Theology, 1997]).

⁸⁰⁹ See above, 128, 143 & 147.

models, anger can represent either a kind of secondary arousal to ward off one of these emotions; or a final, fundamental and powerful assertion of the moral worth of something, against serious denial of this worth—therefore akin, perhaps, to divine wrath.

(Of course, when modern counselling attempts this suspension indefinitely, it deludes itself and tortures its language accordingly to maintain a non-evaluative pretence. Wherever there is emotional conflict, ethical conflicts will lurk nearby. Counselling communities are committed in force to some vision, whether warped or sound, of moral order. Honest appraisals of this can only assist counselling; pretensions to modernist ‘objectivity’ cannot.)

The theological ethicist might then do well to borrow the skills of such a counsellor, seeking both to grasp the perceived importance of whatever is pursued or defended, and to convey our acceptance of the emotion so generated. This would be a clarificatory ‘service of elucidation’, perhaps preparatory to argumentative disagreement, or not, depending on the circumstance.

In Christian thought, this clarification has traditionally overlapped with assessments of conscience. But the affective dimension to conscience has hovered elusively in ‘peripheral vision’, as it were, possibly because the main focus has often been to establish or disestablish its epistemological authority.

When God created man, he breathed into him something divine, as it were a hot and bright spark added to reason, which lit up the mind and showed him the difference between right and wrong. ... [T]he prophet bewails Ephraim and says, “Ephraim prevails against his adversary and treads down judgment.” The adversary here is conscience. Here the Gospel says, “Come to an agreement with your adversary ...” Why does he call conscience the adversary? It is called the adversary because it always opposes our evil desires and tells what we ought to do and we do not, or what we ought not to do and we do.⁸¹⁰

In this early account (as in some later versions), the epistemic process relies on the presence of anxiety, hovering in an awareness peripheral to the actual problem. But such epistemic optimism misses humanity’s improperly ordered loves, which render conscience a fatally flawed basis for *deliberation*. Nevertheless, our investigation accords great value to conscience in the task of *reflection*, to help elucidate what I love. The ordering of those loves will need to be evaluated from elsewhere however.

⁸¹⁰ Dorotheos of Gaza (6th c.), *Didaskaliai* 3. Cited by Oliver O’Donovan, 22 November 2000, in ‘The Subjective Measure’, a seventh lecture of eight in a series entitled *How To Think About How To Act*, for Oxford Honour Schools and B.Th. papers in Christian Moral Reasoning.

It is at this point that the attempt by Callahan, already briefly touched upon,⁸¹¹ is intriguing. We already observed the complexity of his “fully extended, fully inclusive, circular, parallel processing of the dynamic interplays of consciousness.” To his credit, what he has also noticed (and which to a very large extent accounts for the complexity of the process), is the moral ambiguity of the emotions since “the best strategy would include both trusting and skeptical awareness of all of one’s capacities and reactions”, such that there are “fleeting negative feelings that may be most in danger of defensive suppression” and emotions that are to be “rationally and emotionally assessed for appropriateness, or for their infantile or qualitative characteristics. Deficits and numbness should also be considered.” This looks altogether like a *reinvention* of older discussions of conscience for a new language. But what it lacks (and what it must lack, given our complaints over ‘emotion’) is any *decision* about the moral ordering of the decision-maker’s loves. Callahan offers an interesting summary of recent views about expressions of emotion in reference to ethics, largely in an uncontroversial descriptive mode. But the language of science starts to crumble under its own weight (like Stevenson’s emotivism, which it reflects) when deployed even for elementary ethical concepts:

[T]he building blocks of moral thinking are imbued with emotion. The human mind gives evidence of actively creating units consisting of fused thoughts and emotions and then storing these constructions in long-term memory. These cognitive-affective constructs, the thing and the feeling-about-the-thing, appear to be encoded in complex networks of memory, some of which may be complex or extensive enough to be called narratives, ‘scripts’, ‘scenes’ or ‘scenarios’. Moral sentiments consist of such fusions of things joined with feelings about the thing, as for instance, ‘torture = [*sic*] wrong, disgusting,’ or ‘truthtelling = good.’ As we think through a moral conflict or question we call up memory stores and inevitably have our thinking shaped by linked associations.⁸¹²

Elsewhere, the cumulative effect of this leads him to employ another language:

[E]motional responses, especially moral sentiments, indicate the achievement of self-development and those ‘habits of the heart’ known as moral character. As the philosopher Iris Murdoch has expressed this ...⁸¹³

But ‘other’ language must sometimes be unavailable to him:

All of the ‘defenses’ enumerated in psychoanalytic thinking are activations of cognitive-affective structures to deploy attention away from painful reality, or if that fails, to distort what is perceived and felt. Persons who constantly and rigidly use these strategies to avoid pain finally so cripple their emotional capacities that their cognitive and emotional functioning becomes

⁸¹¹ See above, 13.

⁸¹² Callahan, 10-11.

⁸¹³ Ibid., 11.

maladaptive by any standards, whether one talks about neurosis, regression, or moral immaturity.⁸¹⁴

Or perhaps more obviously, for the Christian reader, ‘a seared conscience’ or ‘hardness of heart’!⁸¹⁵ What Callahan struggles to join, Biblical virtue language speaks as one, encoding a normative ethic with certain emotive postures. In this way emotions and ethical commitments become intelligible alongside one another, in a manner that is more quickly accessible and understandable to people than are most modern modes of discourse over ethics (or over emotion for that matter). *Various virtues emerge as the mind ‘fuses’ an emotion to an ethical commitment. But the possibility of so joining the virtue’s components, inheres already within the order of reality.*

They are certainly so ‘fused’ in the minds of those who speak the ‘ethico-emotional’ language of Scripture (and likewise perhaps, that of other older traditions). Biblical language, and the theology formed out of it, comes well equipped to elucidate the relationship between ethics and emotion, and to diagnose its confusions.



In this chapter, I have shown that theology’s ‘logic of love’ is ‘something more’ than virtue, generating a unique conception of it. Virtue is richly emotional, and is instrumental to action within the moral field (rather than being instrumental to the discernment of moral order). This is as opposed to a neo-Aristotelian project that understands virtue generically and universally, and seeks a common rational ground for virtuous conduct, perhaps to supplant all prior deontic conceptions.

Virtue can act as a statement of *aim*, and of *affirmation given and received*. It is not a suitable predicate for *self-description*. Theological virtue-language names various confluences of affection to the order of reality, and various virtues emerge as the mind brings emotions and ethical commitments together. Virtues thereby provide a language *brief* enough for quick deliberation, and since this language does not direct specific acts, it gives a ‘space’ for creative freedom to ‘invent’ actions befitting specific others. Christian communities become places for the learning of virtue by craft-skill, and from others’ evaluation of them. Conscience is related insofar as it provides a means for *reflection* on the current state of an agent’s loves.

⁸¹⁴ Ibid.

⁸¹⁵ For the former, see 1 Tim. 4:2. For the latter see Mk 3:5 & 10:5; Rom. 2:5; Eph. 4:18-19 (and quotations of Is. 6:9-10 in the gospels and in Acts 28:26-27).

The MacIntyre of *After Virtue* wistfully hoped for an ethic of virtue founded on community practise. “We are waiting ... for another—doubtless very different—St. Benedict.”⁸¹⁶ Meilaender’s retort is apt. “Perhaps ... the St. Benedict for whom we wait is not so different from the first one.”⁸¹⁷ We turn, finally, to the account best served by a new Benedict.

⁸¹⁶ Meilaender, 2, citing MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 245.

⁸¹⁷ Meilaender, 17.

PART III:

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE LOGIC OF LOVE

Having shown how the logic of love culminates in a theological theory of virtue, the final chapter will consider some implications for the logic of love in a modern *polis*—a situation, of course, already deeply considered in Augustine’s metaphor of two cities “mixed indistinguishably together in every earthly State”⁸¹⁸, where “[e]ach desires its own kind of peace, and, when they have found what they sought, each lives its own kind of peace.”⁸¹⁹

In this chapter, I will engage with one form of modern ‘peace’, the consumer economy. Theology’s logic of love reveals that in this vision of ‘peace’, one ‘aspect’ of love is excised from the others, to serve a dubious end in a state of constant voracity. In turn, this warps the consciousness brought to modern ethical discussions, causing the problems under consideration (and even the interpersonal relationships with which they are concerned) to be construed as problems of consumption. I bring the logic of love to this warped consciousness to recover aspects of the moral field that have been missed.

I end the thesis with a collection of briefer comments. I flag a series of discussions (and a non-discussion) that could be pursued with liberal political philosophy, but I make no attempt to have these discussions. I show how the logic of love might explain the scenarios and answer the questions asked in the introduction to Part One. I suggest that theology’s logic of love makes the best sense of moral identity.



⁸¹⁸ R. W. Dyson, *The Pilgrim City: Social and Political Ideas in the Writings of St. Augustine of Hippo* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001), 211.

⁸¹⁹ Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 581 (XIV.1).

Chapter IX: The Logic of Love and the Earthly City

Having seen an Enlightenment and a Nietzschean approach to the relationship between ethics and emotion, a ‘logic of love’ has been offered as the theological alternative to account for the relationship. Theology’s account of virtue includes this logic (in all its senses), giving a varied, nuanced language by which agents can relate their affections to the moral field. In this orienting role, virtue assists agents to participate in the divine reordering of their loves (in concert with other ‘boundary conditions’ that delimit what is good in the moral field). The subtle brevity of this language assists in quick deliberation, and variously assists Christian communities.

In this chapter, I will go beyond the domain of Christian communities to consider some implications of the logic of love for the modern *polis*. Basic to this account will be Augustine’s conception of two entangled cities, each seeking their own form of peace according to their own logics of love.

In Section One, I examine the consumer economy, where an emaciated teleology strips desire of telic order, to maximise the transfer of capital. Social relations are displaced by commodity fetish, making ethics marginal and incoherent. I expand on these ethical implications in Section Two, where I show that relationships are construed as commodities, with ethical questions taking the form and structures of the consumer economy.

Section Three uses theology’s logic of love to ‘audit’ the consciousness of the consumer economy. I will utilise O’Donovan’s analytic of love’s ‘aspects’ for assistance. The logic of love brings intelligibility to envy; names modern Pelagianism (and its ruinous outcomes); ‘decodes’ the disorders of parental love; and offers a true ‘identity’ in place of false ones.

Section Four gestures toward some directions for future conversation amidst the complexity of liberal political philosophy, and I will finish the thesis by suggesting in Section Five that theology’s logic of love makes ‘the best sense’ of moral realities that surround us.

It is in the nature of disorder that some forms of thought will refuse to participate in the reordering of its loves. Ever since NT Christians lived in tangled proximity to pagan neighbours, Christian theology knew that openness about its logic of love neither harmed its cause nor swept all before it. Cognisant of this, Augustine extended upon biblical metaphors to tell pagan Rome of two ‘cities’ or societies, competing for cultural space, whose citizenry live respectively ‘for self’ (in disordered love) or ‘for God’ (participating in the divine

reordering of love). “Each desires its own kind of peace, and, when they have found what they sought, each lives its own kind of peace.”⁸²⁰ The uneasiness of their coexistence follows from differing ‘logics of love’ concerning ‘peace’.

The competition of these ‘entangled’ cities for cultural space is affirmed by Nietzsche, whose concern is clearly to ‘free’ people from the Augustinian city. Any surprise that there are two such cities come only to ‘dwellers’ in the ‘no man’s land’ between them—contested zones over which the influence of each ‘city’ ebbs and flows. This territory was extensively colonised during the Enlightenment.

But for those consciously ‘dwelling’ in either ‘city’, the metaphor uncontroversially names the estimate formed by ‘citizens’ of each ‘city’ toward the postures of the other, regarding them as lifeless, boring, dull, futile, or whatever. The uneasiness of their coexistence is constituted by the regard each ‘city’ has of the other as a tragic aberration of its glorious self. Nietzsche’s egoistic naturalism decried what he construed as Christianity’s pusillanimous, degenerate draining of humanity’s birthrights. Similarly, when Augustine views the Nietzschean aspects of Rome (through what Calvin would later call the ‘lenses’ of Scripture), there straightforwardly follows denunciation of humanity as deprived, deluded, and beset by conflicting impulses.

In this respect the two cities cannot help but be missionary states, and at various times and in sundry places, each ‘city’ employs a variety of strategies to woo those on the fringe of the other. They know the logic of their love. (Unlike, I suggest, the Enlightenment’s ‘objectivity’, which imagines its pitted, blasted and very temporary ‘no man’s land’ to be an enduring park of permanent residence).

⁸²⁰ Here is the full quotation:

Though there are many great nations throughout the world, living according to different rites and customs, and distinguished by many different forms of language, arms and dress, there nonetheless exists only two orders, as we may call them, of human society: and, following our Scriptures, we may rightly speak of these two as cities. The one is made up of men who live according to the flesh, and the other of those who live according to the spirit. Each desires its own kind of peace, and, when they have found what they sought, each lives its own kind of peace. (Ibid., XIV.1)

This concept is evident from the start of *De div. Dei* (3, I.pref); but the second half of the work sees particular emphasis upon this ‘entanglement’ of one among the other: e.g. 448 (X.32); 450 (XI.1); 498 (XII.1); 511 (XII.9); cf. 587 (XIV.4) & 632 (XIV.28).

The view is not confined to one biblical author. Cf. Ps. 119:19-20 & v54; Mt. 5:13-16 (perhaps); Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 6:14-18 (but noting ‘entanglement’ as a given in 1 Cor. 5:10); 2 Cor. 10:2-3; Eph. 2:19; Phil. 3:20; 1 Pt. 1:1,17; 2:9-11; Heb. 11:13.

1. 'Peace' by consumption: desire as meaning

What, then, is the peace of the modern earthly city, and what is its logic of love? There are various ways to answer this. Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self*, which I will examine below, shows that there may be a number of competing answers. But here I will consider a nakedly pursued and aggressively defended vision of peace and love: the consumer economy.

a) Questioning 'consumer economy'

"The dissociation of sensibility, which T. S. Eliot so confidently claimed was the hallmark of modern life, returns to a unity in the consuming life. Reason and passion unite in the metaphysics of the brand."⁸²¹ James B. Twitchell promotes a liberal and middle-class domestication of Nietzsche that is joyfully exuberant over the act of consumption. Peter Stearns, a historian of emotion, cites five studies which find that in our century, "[g]rowing approval of envy has adjusted to the needs of a consumer economy."⁸²² Historical enquiry seeks only to notice and document 'adjustments' such as these, leaving others—such as ourselves—to ask whether the change is sustainable or defensible. We might also wonder if approved-envy would remain 'envy', or whether it would become something else. A more searching question asks if the 'adjustment' points to any other ethical 'adjustments'.

Of 'consumer economy' itself, we might ask: what is it, and what are the 'needs' toward which the adjustment has taken place? John Milbank's account of the drift from 'Christendom' to modern secularity suggests that the beginnings of the 'adjustment' are to be found long before we might ever have suspected:

Montesquieu ... suggest[s] that, for the beginnings of a capitalist economy, it was not sufficient that the old guild and corporation restrictions on production, trade and usury be lifted. This merely negative picture assumes that the 'desire for wealth' is natural and unproblematic. Instead, the capitalist take-off presupposed a shift in the very economy of desire. Previously, modes of public style and behaviour were regarded as desirable or otherwise because they were ultimately related to accepted standards of the common good. Now, by contrast, public style and behaviour becomes the subject of fashion and of an endless 'diversion'. What now matters, as thinkers like Montesquieu and Helvetius noted, is not the 'proper' object of desire but rather the promotion of desire itself, and the manipulation and control of this process. Only this reversal of the order of priority between desire and goal permitted a new code of social practice where people could start to see themselves as primarily 'producers' and 'consumers'. For to 'abstract desire' corresponded a new 'abstract wealth', meaning the

⁸²¹ James B. Twitchell, *Lead Us Into Temptation: The Triumph of American Materialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 177-78.

⁸²² Peter N. Stearns, "History of Emotions: Issues of Change and Impact," in *Handbook of Emotions: Second Edition*, eds Michael Lewis and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, (New York; London: Guilford Press, 2000), 23.

maximum diversification and increase of production, and the maximum circulation of products and their representative species through exchange.⁸²³

None of Milbank's citations in support⁸²⁴ actually form this point, seeming mainly to concern the rise of what Foucault discusses as 'mercantilism'. But by drawing upon their scattered references to desire, Milbank has made a semi-intuitive leap that seems most helpful. If the ordered desire of Aelred and Jane Austin's "something more" seem unintelligible to us, then an account of the unintelligibility is required. This can in part be found in a modern collusion between desire and mass consumption.

Whether there were ever "accepted standards of common good" is debatable, but Milbank's main point stands, even if what was generally accepted in debates about common good was the existence of a realist moral order with generic and telic dimensions (although various accounts of this order may have been given).

Perhaps the impoverished teleology that engendered "reversal of the order of priority between desire and goal", was in train for Montesquieu to observe; but now, this impoverishment renders 'ordered' desire unintelligible. The 'bottom line' and 'cash value' of this "rotation of crops"⁸²⁵ is precisely a bottom line and a cash value, a social mandate to produce and consume *for* the creation of wealth.

b) Commodity fetish as displaced social love

This is Marx's point. "In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes."⁸²⁶

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his 'natural superiors,' and ... has left no other bond between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous 'cash payment.' It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms has set up that single, unconscionable freedom—Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation. ... The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every

⁸²³ John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 33.

⁸²⁴ Montesquieu, "The Spirit of Laws," in *The Political Theory of Montesquieu*, ed. Melvin Richter, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 190, 199; Eric Voeglin, "Helvetius and the Genealogy of Passions," in *From Enlightenment to Revolution*, ed. Eric Voeglin, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1975); Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (London: Tavistock, 1970), 166-214.

⁸²⁵ This is Kierkegaard's phrase for an endless parade of diversions from boredom. See above, 204.

⁸²⁶ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848), tr. Samuel Moore, *Great Books of the Western World* edition, including *Capital*, vol. 50 (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica and the University of Chicago, 1990), 421.

occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers.⁸²⁷

Of course Marx unfolds this to propound the fundamental basis of capital as the *commodity*, which “by its properties satisfies human wants of some sort or another. The nature of such wants, whether, for instance, they spring from the stomach or from fancy, makes no difference.”⁸²⁸ Marx distinguishes commodities from objects made by people who are known to each other in, say, a village.⁸²⁹ These objects are not commodities, even if they meet needs, for in the commodity there inheres a form of ‘fetishism’. His somewhat counter-intuitive claim (especially so when reading him from within modern capitalism), is that the fetish we bring to the commodity does not inhere in some raw, natural ‘value’ of the thing, but is present to the extent that humans have worked it. “This fetishism of commodities has its origin ... in the peculiar social character of the labour that produces them.” In this way commodities take on an air of mystery, “because in it the social character of men’s labour appears ... as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour”, and social relations begin to be expressed as something else—the products of labour.⁸³⁰ Money is of course based upon this valuable social good, but serves precisely to conceal it.⁸³¹

Sadly, here is not the place to watch Marx’s account of capital unfold, nor to discourse upon its subsequent history. Suffice to note the simple power of the initial observation. Its intriguing corollary would seem to be that in acts of purchase and consumption, there often resides a form of emotion that might more properly belong to the world of social relationships. Anyone who has indulged in ‘retail therapy’ might recognise this fetishistic emotion. (As shoppers, we do well to ask if such self-administered ‘therapy’ is in lieu of some failure in our own social relationships.)

On Marx’s account, the ‘proper home’ of this fetishistic emotion—the world of social relationships—is essentially lost, even down to the level of the family, since capitalism has “torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a

⁸²⁷ Ibid., 420.

⁸²⁸ Karl Marx, *Capital* (1883), ed. Friedrich Engels, tr. Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, *Great Books of the Western World* edition, including *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, vol. 50 (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica and the University of Chicago, 1990), 13.

⁸²⁹ Ibid., 34.

⁸³⁰ Ibid., 31.

⁸³¹ Ibid., 33.

mere money relation.”⁸³² Jürgen Habermas believes that since Marx, the only change to this critique is the *mode* of alienation:

[I]n advanced capitalist countries the standard of living has ... risen to such an extent, at least among broad strata of the population, that the interest in the emancipation of society can no longer be articulated directly in economic terms. ‘Alienation’ has been deprived of its palpable economic force as misery. At most, the pauperism of alienated labor finds its remote reflection in a poverty of alienated leisure—scurvy and rickets are preserved today in the form of psychosomatic disturbances, hunger and drudgery in the wasteland of externally manipulated motivation, in the satisfaction of needs which are no longer ‘one’s own’—the more sublime form of deprivation is no longer even specific to one class. The ‘deprivations’ have become more secret, even if as consuming as ever.⁸³³

Thus against the bourgeoisie and with “a world to win”,⁸³⁴ the workingmen of the world did not unite. With the world now on offer to consume, collusion with the bourgeoisie seemed rather more sensible. “Consumerism is not forced on us. It is not against our better judgment. It is”, asserts James B. Twitchell, “our better judgment.”⁸³⁵

c) The ethical incoherence of ‘consumer economy’

On the Habermas account, this “better judgment” is our undoing. But Twitchell aligns himself with those liberal defenders of American commercialism who are dissatisfied with the negativity of Marxist interpretations originating in the Frankfurt school, and who find them to be lacking as an account of actual consumerist behaviour.⁸³⁶ His repeatedly asserted (if not exactly argued) thesis is that contrary to the Frankfurt school, no ‘false consciousness’ is at work in consumers, since they know exactly what they are doing: they consume precisely in order to bring meaning to their lives.

In the way we live now, it is simply impossible to consume objects without consuming meaning. Meaning is pumped *and* drawn everywhere throughout the modern commercial world, into the farthest reaches of space and into the smallest divisions of time. Commercialism is the water we all swim in, the air we breathe, our sunlight and shade. Currents of desire flow around objects like smoke in a wind tunnel.⁸³⁷

Because of this, Twitchell is impressed by sociological functions in consumption that he understands to replace those of a previous generation’s religion (which, in turn, are only intelligible to him as an alternative version of consumption).

⁸³² Marx and Engels, *Manifesto*, 420.

⁸³³ Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice* tr. John Viertel, (Cambridge: Polity, 1988; originally published 1971), 195-96.

⁸³⁴ Marx and Engels, *Manifesto*, 434.

⁸³⁵ Twitchell, 11.

⁸³⁶ *Ibid.*, 41-43 & nn.11, 12.

⁸³⁷ *Ibid.*, 283.

As Max Weber first argued ... much of the Protestant Reformation was geared toward denying the holiness of many things that the Catholic Church had endowed with meanings. From the inviolable priesthood to the sacrificial holy water, this deconstructive movement systematically unloaded meaning. Soon the marketplace would capture this offloaded meaning and apply it to secular things. Buy this, you'll be saved. You deserve a break today. You, you're the one. We are the company that cares about you. You're worth it. You're in good hands. We care. Trust in us. We are here for you. We have grown not weaker but stronger by accepting these self evidently ridiculous myths that sacralize mass-produced objects; we have not wasted away but have proved inordinately powerful; have not devolved into barbarism, but seem to have marginally improved. Dreaded affluenza notwithstanding, commercialism has lessened pain. Most of us have more pleasure and less discomfort in our lives than most of the people most of the time in all of history.⁸³⁸

In the nature of this case, where desire, consumption and 'meaning' are celebrated as resident within each other, ethical questions are marginal at best. Thus in his largely celebratory account of consumption, the "intractable poor" who remain visible (and yet who, at 4% of the United States, represent a number of people equal to roughly double the population of Sydney, Australia) are only at a disadvantage in that they cannot join in to consume more than they do.⁸³⁹ Similarly, those in serious debt impress Twitchell only by their relative rarity, since 95.5% of consumer debt gets paid. There are a "few" who "become delinquent and default,"⁸⁴⁰ even if the 4.5% default rate of this "few", calculated just from the \$US600 billion credit card debt that Twitchell mentions elsewhere,⁸⁴¹ would cover what the United Kingdom government spends on housing and the environment in a year. There are moments when he notices some negatives in consumerist culture, such as inherent wastefulness, recklessness and the encouragement of gambling.⁸⁴² Although "shopaholics" and kleptomaniacs are discussed, of the former Twitchell can say "I admit it is hard to take this affliction seriously."⁸⁴³ Overall, consumerism makes for "a more democratic world, a more egalitarian world, and, I think, a more interesting world."⁸⁴⁴ A cynical, or non-sequential, use of 'should' is offered in support—in either case, ethics is marginal: "While this is dreary and depressing to some, as doubtless it should be, it is liberating and democratic to many more."⁸⁴⁵

⁸³⁸ Ibid., 30-31.

⁸³⁹ Ibid., 32.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid., 34.

⁸⁴¹ Ibid., 250 n.8.

⁸⁴² Ibid., 284.

⁸⁴³ Ibid., 252 n.10.

⁸⁴⁴ Ibid., 285, 286.

⁸⁴⁵ Ibid.

But for some observers within the market, ethical incoherence is not as easily side-stepped. The *Redefining Progress* organisation⁸⁴⁶ finds ethical incoherence intrinsic to standard economic indicators, with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) under fire as main target.

In John Ruskin's nineteenth-century neologism, an economy produces "illth" as well as wealth, but conventional measures of well-being simply collapse these two into the one indicator. Transfers of funds for, say, weddings, are added together in the same GDP that includes fund transfers for divorces and the rehousing of divorcees. GDP might rise when measuring, for example, growth in public infrastructure and reduction of poverty, but it also rises when family relationships deteriorate (whether from the over-watching of television or from divorce), and when illness, habitat destruction and crime rise. GDP also fails adequately to reflect goods such as volunteer work or evils such as chronic unemployment. Our point about desire and consumption is well-made:

Then there's the question of addictive consumption. Free-market fundamentalists are inclined to attack critics of the GDP as 'elitists.' People buy things because they want them, they say, and who knows better than the people themselves what adds to well-being? It makes a good one liner. But is the truth really so simple? Some 40 percent of the [U.S.] nation's drinking exceeds the level of 'moderation,' defined as two drinks a day. Credit-card abuse has become so pervasive that local chapters of Debtors Anonymous hold forty-five meetings a week in the San Francisco Bay area alone. Close to 50 percent of Americans consider themselves overweight. When one considers the \$32 billion diet industry, the GDP becomes truly bizarre. It counts the food that people wish they didn't eat, and then the billions they spend to lose the added pounds that result. The coronary bypass patient becomes almost a metaphor for the nation's measure of progress: shovel in the fat, pay the consequences, add the two together, and the economy grows some more.⁸⁴⁷

Against this, a new measure of progress is proposed—the 'Genuine Progress Indicator' (GPI), which accounts as either plusses or minuses an array of factors, including the household and volunteer economy; crime and defensive expenditures; distribution of income; resource depletion and habitat degradation; and loss of leisure. Cobb et. al. are not unaware of the opposition they face in this:

Economists have couched their resistance to new indicators mainly in philosophical terms. A measure of national progress must be scientific and value-free, they say. Any attempt to assess how the economy actually affects people would involve too many assumptions and imputations, too many value judgments regarding what to include. Better to stay on the supposed *terra firma* of the GDP, which for all its faults has acquired an aura of hardheaded empirical science.⁸⁴⁸

⁸⁴⁶ Details of the group are published at <http://www.rprogress.org> (accessed April 2003). A manifesto of sorts is Clifford Cobb, et al., "If the GDP is Up, Why is America Down," *Atlantic Monthly* 276 no. 4 (1995).

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid., 67.

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid., 70

Perhaps we should pause to observe that the authors may be too close to their subject for complete clarity. As a measure of total monetary exchange, GDP simply quantifies another aspect of reality, as in the manner of any science. It is the unwarranted conclusion that this measure represents *progress* which demands refutation. These authors imply that all economists make this unwarranted conclusion, when it is equally possible that economists only seek to defend GDP as a simple measure of monetary exchange. Of course, we suspect that economists vary in the degree to which they are clear on the difference between GDP and progress; and the authors have certainly named a confusion in popular and political use of the GDP. Their own GPI should not replace the GDP, but should rather complement it. The authors would also need to accept that robust ethical debate is needed over the constitutive elements of a GPI (including whether ‘progress’ is even the correct metaphor in which to speak of a society’s well-being). There may even have to be different GPIs, each reflecting different visions of the good in liberal society.

Nonetheless, these authors are in a better position to judge (concerning American society, at least) the degree to which there is hostility to a GPI, even as a complementary index. Resistance as high as they claim is consistent with a free-trade milieu where ‘freedom’ is constituted in the maximum possible license accorded to desire, in order to maximise the transference of capital. In such a milieu, the detriment to free-trade of any prior moral ordering for ‘emotion’ would preclude any recognition of it. Any personal or social moral governance of desire, where expressed as consumption, will be vigorously challenged.

These, obviously, are the real stakes when (for example) social censorship of sexually explicit material is discussed. Opposition to censorship is (to borrow from a different discussion) probably “born not of the logic of argument but of the logic of capitalism.”⁸⁴⁹ We should, therefore, begin to wonder whether these stakes are also at issue, more covertly perhaps, in other arenas of ethical debate.

2. Relationships as modes of consumption

I have suggested that in consumer economy, an emaciated teleology excises desire from any teleological ordering, to maximise the transfer of capital, and social relations are displaced by commodity fetish. This makes ethical questions marginal, and creates an ethical incoherence that must largely be regarded as incidental to the transfer of capital.

⁸⁴⁹ Michael Banner, *Christian Ethics and Contemporary Moral Problems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 128.

I will now expand on the ethical implications. Not only are social ethics incoherent and ethical questions marginalised: relationships themselves are construed as commodities, and ethical questions take the form and structure dictated by consumer economy.

a) Relationships as commodity

In a final twist to the displacement of social relations by commodity fetish, social relations themselves—by now so much subject to alienation that they have ceased to be intelligible as social relations—become commodified into zones of consumption. “After all, we are all consumers now, consumers of everything—consumers of health services, consumers of things and ideas, consumers of political representation, even consumers of what high culture there is left.”⁸⁵⁰ The market’s institution and endorsement of disordered desire transparently invites consumption of each other in various ways. Ample demonstration could be given by reference to advertising, although there is no controversy here and the point would be wearisome.

Of far greater import is that within this kind of consciousness, consumption of the other becomes plainly evident in modern ethical discourse, which inexorably patterns itself as if everything is an act of free-market consumption. When embryo research is legitimated by its benefits ‘for medicine’ (and we might pause to ask, ‘for whom?’), the consumptive act is no mere metaphor. (Michael Banner’s related argument wonders if the practise of abortion “is the practice of competition, born not of the logic of argument but of the logic of capitalism.”⁸⁵¹) Or, when the main legitimisation for sexual behaviour is sexual self-identity, sexual ‘rights’ are an adjunct to consumer ‘rights’, with a correlative ‘sex industry’, where people may consume each other as required. (When the liberal circumscription against ‘harm to others’ is invoked to limit this consumption, the ‘resource’ becomes renewable.) When an occasional pious paean to the elderly remembers them as not merely an ‘inspiration’ or a ‘national treasure’, but as a ‘resource’, the best that is being said of them is that some unused residue in them befits our munificent consumption. Or, the crossover of desire and consumption into thought about marriage, can manifest itself in no other way than reduced rates of marriage and increased rates of divorce, as ‘partners’ become intelligible as at best, a kind of accessory. Or as Wendell Berry puts it:

Marriage, in what is evidently its most popular version, is now on the one hand an intimate ‘relationship’ involving (ideally) two successful careerists in the same bed, and on the other hand a sort of private political system in which rights and interests must be asserted and defended. Marriage, in other words, has now taken the form of divorce: a prolonged and impassioned

⁸⁵⁰ Twitchell, 23.

⁸⁵¹ Banner, *Christian Ethics*, 128.

negotiation as to how things shall be divided. During their understandably temporary association, the 'married' couple will typically consume a large quantity of merchandise and a large portion of each other.⁸⁵²

Two more examples illustrate the point.

b) Children and 'wantedness'

Certain kinds of childbirth, where "parents who begot a child did so *for the sake of* the parents who were to care for it", have long been observed "implicitly [to convert] the child from a person to a commodity" (presence or absence of payment notwithstanding), since a parental relationship is incurred only to alienate it.⁸⁵³

Such commodification might also inhere in the 'wanting' of children. But this claim seems problematic when at least one point of happy agreement between Christian theology and most other forms of thought has been that for people to want children is an uncontroversial example of something both 'right' and 'natural'. In Christian thought, the joyful recognition of God's gracious gift of new life exemplifies right desire. The sin of Onan (irrespective of later abuses of Gen. 38:8-9) was the refusal to assist in begetting offspring who, under laws of levirate marriage, would not legally be his own. His action is unheard of, biblically speaking, and its malevolence lies in his refusal to see new life ordained by God as a good far surpassing his own political concerns. In biblical thought about children, disordered desire manifests as the failure so to 'want'.

However, there is a newer version of 'wanting', intelligible only given the modern rationale of desire, which understands itself actually to grant moral status as a fief. Peter Singer is a well known advocate of this view,⁸⁵⁴ arguing that a new-born child "who is clearly not a person in the ethically relevant sense" somehow acquires her moral status later. This moral status derives from her emerging capacities, from the degree to which both parents attach to her, and from her acceptance into a wider moral community. "Could we return to a view of infants more like that of ancient Greece, in which a public ceremony a short time after birth marked not only the parents' decision to accept the child but also society's conferral on it of the status of a person?" Until such a ceremony, the child's moral status remains provisional, for it waits to be "accepted as having the same right to life as others." This provisional status can summarily be withdrawn, it is suggested, up to (an "admittedly ... arbitrary")

⁸⁵² Wendell Berry, *What are People For?* (London: Routledge, 1990), 180. My thanks to Brian Brock for this quotation.

⁸⁵³ Oliver M.T. O'Donovan, *Begotten or Made?* (London: Oxford University Press, 1984), 37.

⁸⁵⁴ Peter Singer, *Rethinking Life and Death: The Collapse of Our Traditional Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 216-17, and for quotations following.

twenty-eight days after birth; but thankfully, since “a right to life is a more serious matter” than rights to vote or drive, Singer avers that:

The strongest argument for treating infants as having a right to life from the moment of birth is simply that no other line has the visibility and self-evidence required to mark the beginning of a socially recognised right to life. This is a powerful consideration; maybe in the end it is even enough to tilt the balance against a change in the law in this area. On that I remain unsure.⁸⁵⁵

I will return shortly to Singer’s uncertainty.

c) Identity and unwantedness

In apotemnophilia, the apotemnophilic wants to be an amputee. A new epidemic of this condition also seems to reflect the consciousness-shifting that has taken place in the consumer economy. Carl Elliott describes the language of self used by these people:

I have been struck by the way [apotemnophiliacs] use the language of identity and selfhood in describing their desire to lose a limb. “I have always felt I should be an amputee.” “I felt, this is who I was.” “It is a desire to see myself, be myself, as I ‘know’ or ‘feel’ myself to be.” This kind of language has persuaded many clinicians that apotemnophilia [is] a problem of body image. What true apotemnophiles share ... is the feeling [says surgeon Robert Smith, who amputates for apotemnophiliacs] “that their body is incomplete with their normal complement of four limbs.” Smith has elsewhere speculated that apotemnophilia is not a psychiatric disorder but a neuropsychological one, with biological roots. Perhaps it has less to do with desire than with being stuck in the wrong body.

Yet what exactly does it mean to be stuck in the wrong body? For the past several years I have been working with a research group interested in problems surrounding the use of medical interventions for personal enhancement. One of the issues we have struggled with is how to understand people who use the language of self and identity to explain why they want these interventions: a man who says he is “not himself” unless he is on Prozac; a woman who gets breast-reduction surgery because she is “not the large-breasted type”; a bodybuilder who says he took anabolic steroids because he wants to look on the outside the way he feels on the inside; and—perhaps most common—transsexuals whose experience is described as “being trapped in the wrong body.” The image is striking, and more than a little odd. In each case the true self is the one produced by medical science.⁸⁵⁶

The collusion of desire and consumption is disclosed in the surgeon’s vicarious consumption of the limb. In Bernard Mandeville’s provocative *Grumbling Hive*, the human ‘hive’ thrives on the basis of meeting the basest human desires, but then in an about face, it attains honesty and banishes vice—thus losing its status as a great and comfortable nation-state. Mandeville’s “moral” is plain enough:

THEN leave Complaints: Fools only strive
To make a Great an honest Hive.
T’ enjoy the World’s Conveniencies,

⁸⁵⁵ Ibid., 217.

⁸⁵⁶ Carl Elliott, “A New Way to Be Mad,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 286 no. 6 (2000): 74.

Be famed in War, yet live in Ease
 Without great Vices, is a vain
 Eutopia seated in the Brain.
 ...
 Hunger's a dreadful Plague no doubt,
 Yet who digests or thrives without?
 ...
 Nay, where the People would be great,
 As necessary to the State,
 As Hunger is to make 'em eat.
 Bare Vertue can't make Nations live
 In Splendour; they, that would revive
 A Golden Age, must be as free,
 For Acorns, as for Honesty.⁸⁵⁷

In an older comment by W.R. Sorley, Mandeville “was clever enough to detect the luxury and vice that gather round the industrial system, and perverse enough to mistake them for its foundation.”⁸⁵⁸ A decision has to be made for or against Sorley's quip, since by some modern estimates, Mandeville is a visionary. But Mandeville's ‘hive’ has produced apotemnophiliacs, surgeons willing to cut them, and a society puzzled over how otherwise to help them (and worried that ‘help’, other than by amputation, is a violation). This result should cause us wonder how such a consuming society became possible. Harvey Cox, not usually noted for his rigorous Augustinianism, laments:

I am usually a keen supporter of ecumenism. But the contradictions between the world views of the traditional religions on the one hand and the world view of the Market religion on the other are so basic that no compromise seems possible, and I am secretly hoping for a rebirth of polemics.⁸⁵⁹

Theology's logic of love willingly contributes to this rebirth.

3. Consumer society in the perspective of love's ‘aspects’

A consumer society emaciates teleology and orders desire to the maximisation of wealth. In the resultant shift in consciousness, ethical questions become construed as problems of consumption. I will now show how the logic of love ‘audits’ this consciousness and I will return to the analytic of love's ‘aspects’ for assistance. The logic of love brings intelligibility to envy; names modern Pelagianism (and its ruinous outcomes); ‘decodes’ the disorders of parental love; and offers a true ‘identity’ in place of false ones.

a) ‘Aspects’ of love in consumerist perspective

I have suggested a consuming society to have become possible because in ‘consumer economy’, “the promotion of desire itself”⁸⁶⁰ mandates the maximum transference of capital,

⁸⁵⁷ Mandeville, ll. 409-14, 417-18 & 427-33.

⁸⁵⁸ Sorley, 302.

⁸⁵⁹ Harvey Cox, “The Market as God,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 283 no. 3 (1999): 23.

⁸⁶⁰ Milbank, 33.

but that this represents an emaciated teleology. However, further specificity is required in reference to theology's logic of love, and in this instance, O'Donovan's analysis of love's logic into a set of *aspects* is helpful.⁸⁶¹

This is a society for whom *positive* love (where subjects self-direct toward ends chosen for happiness) is radically excised from *cosmic*, *rational* and *benevolent* love (which respectively respond to the telos, order, and persons of the moral field). The latter three loves are privatised and considered optional; but a general agreement on the pre-eminence of positive love orders public life by sustaining 'consumer economy'. Clearly, *only* voracity and selective sight can follow, when positive love is robbed of the ordering it finds alongside the other aspects of love. (Consequently, voracity attains a highly respected status in ethical debate, as we have seen.)

A question above asked whether the 'approved-envy' of 'consumer economy' would remain 'envy'.⁸⁶² The 'aspects' of love also cast light on this question. In a milieu where positive love is generally the only aspect of love to receive general endorsement, then envy will seem churlish, because after all, people should be allowed to pursue their positive loves. But the approval will have a hollow ring, as people find themselves still to be envious. The force of Nietzsche's condemnation of *ressentiment* lies precisely in this kind of construction. When positive love is the only true love, envy is simply a physiological reaction at my own failure to achieve my positive loves against someone else's excellence. Thus *ressentiment* has no real moral claim.

But within the logic of love, envy becomes intelligible. The presence of rational love and benevolent love may be at work if in 'envy' we are noticing someone (perhaps ourselves) who lacks necessary goods amidst the excess of the consumer economy, and (perhaps angrily) seeks justice for them. Conversely, envy may the absence of rational and benevolent love—and therefore truly a vice (rather than mere 'physiological' *ressentiment*)—since under divine reordering, these two aspects of love celebrate the enjoyment of various goods by precious others. In both cases, cosmic love (admittedly an odd way to speak of love for God) responds to telic order: God's ordering of others to himself makes people so precious that we care about them. We 'enjoy them in God'.

⁸⁶¹ See above, 117-118.

⁸⁶² See above, 262.

b) 'Consumer economy' as Pelagian

To question this pre-eminence of positive love is generally taken by Nietzscheans as a denial of it. This erroneous fear is understandable. By calling for a reduction of the status of the only good they acknowledge, we appear, in their selective sight, to be emaciating 'life' rather than enhancing it. The usually pursuant charge is that theology is Manichean: it must hate desire, the body, and so on.

This strategy, curiously, is reminiscent of ancient Pelagians, who also accused theologians of being Manichean. I will examine what follows from this parallel, showing that just as ancient Pelagians made facile diagnoses of miserable human problems, so also do proponents of 'consumer economy'. Yet this is done in the name of the enhancement of life.

Like ancient Pelagians, Twitchell repeatedly attempts to characterise opponents as Manichean.⁸⁶³ The allegation is that his opponents condemn desire itself. Accordingly, "materialism" is said always to have been "fiercely denigrated" in Christian thought.⁸⁶⁴ "At the heart of Christian orthodoxy is a fierce condemnation of the material world", and an apparently Manichean Christ is pronouncing against "commercialism" in Luke 6:20-21, 16:13b, and 18:18-25.⁸⁶⁵ Similarly, leftist sympathisers to the Frankfurt school are lampooned *ad hominem* by their enjoyment of the material order (they drive Volvos etc.); the lampoon can only succeed if the targets are understood to be Manichean ascetics (who should therefore spurn material comforts).

This construal of opponents as Manichean is significant, not because Twitchell is a poor scholar, but because his strategy typifies the Nietzschean ploy commonly used against Christian thought. (We have also seen such a ploy used by Nussbaum against Augustine.⁸⁶⁶) Thus it becomes important for Twitchell's thesis (that consumption brings meaning) to deride an unnamed Archbishop of Canterbury, who said "I do not read advertisements—I would spend all my time wanting things" on the basis that this Archbishop "quite forget[s] that indeed he does 'read advertisements' and that he does spend much time 'wanting things' as well as exchanging them."⁸⁶⁷

⁸⁶³ Cf. Augustine, *De nupt. et conc.* II chapters 9, 15, 38, 49 & 50-51 for the ancient Pelagian strategy to characterise orthodox opponents as Manichean.

⁸⁶⁴ Twitchell, 61.

⁸⁶⁵ Ibid., 62. Quite aside from the Manichean charge, a robust debate should ensue over this reading of these passages. The first reply would be that Twitchell's thesis must have made it impossible for him *not* to see "commercialism", and modern American consumption, everywhere.

⁸⁶⁶ See above, 103f.

⁸⁶⁷ Twitchell, 61.

A Manichean Archbishop, though novel, is conceivable: suspicious of his desire, he would seek never to **want** things. But the episcopal advert-reading habits are also consonant with the logic of love's view of *things* and the *desire* for them as constitutive elements of God's good reality, where understanding and praxis is needed in view of the greater goods also resident in that same reality. Thus a Christian Archbishop would say that he chose not solely to want **things**, since he understands his wants finally to find their proper home elsewhere. (That is, he participates in love divinely commended, seeking within a consumerist society that only knows positive love, to learn responses of rational, benevolent and cosmic love. His virtuous advert-reading habits assist to produce this ordinate passion; but rather than calling himself virtuous, he deals with each opportunity to read, or not read, adverts, as it arises.)

Ancient Pelagianism and modern liberalism would be merely analogous if the only parallel between them were this tarring of opponents with a Manichean brush. But the parallels extend further than mere analogy. When Twitchell describes consumption as an unmixed good, the desire to consume is not problematic despite whatever problems are faced by the poor, the indebted, the kleptomaniacs and the 'shopaholics'. Likewise, ancient Pelagians believed no evils to arise from goods; and since no natural faults inhered within human nature, sin was merely dysfunction.⁸⁶⁸

Marxist and Puritan naysayers notwithstanding, the desire to consume is deep and abiding. We have not been tricked into desire. We have led ourselves into temptation because there is something so pleasurable about it. Like other behavior carried to excess, gathering stuff may even have had evolutionary rewards. It is well to remember that such behavior only becomes a sickness, an addiction, an affliction, when your debits exceed your credits.⁸⁶⁹

The uncomplicated, approving use of evolutionary naturalism, and restriction of moral failure only to dysfunction (such as we saw in Julian's objection to Augustine⁸⁷⁰) continues the many parallels with ancient Pelagian argument. But against Twitchell's Pelagianism, the Christian Archbishop would assert what Twitchell strenuously denies: that advertising is no unmixed and liberating blessing, since mysteriously, our desires can somehow take on lives of their own. Advertisers are hardly displeased with this; in every sense, they bank on it.

The burden of Twitchell's thesis makes it important for him to avoid the deeper problems of Pelagianism. Unsurprisingly then, he fails to notice how poorly it bodes for the thesis (that

⁸⁶⁸ Cf. Augustine, *Cont. Jul.*, 92-93 (II.9 §31), where Augustine's five-point summary outlines both Julian's Pelagianism, and the form of his own refutation. That evil does not arise from good, and that humanity possesses no natural faults, broadly paraphrases of two of these five points.

⁸⁶⁹ Twitchell, 252.

⁸⁷⁰ See above, 243.

consumption brings meaning) when he recounts a study of ‘meaning’ among happy and unhappy families. When psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi asked members of eighty-two families which household objects the family members most cherished, “adult members of the [five] happiest families picked things that reminded them of other people and good times they’d had together”, as distinct from members of unhappy families; and “happy family members often described the times their family had spent on a favorite couch, rather than its style or color.” Then, a striking non sequitur: “Although objects might change, it was clear that both happy and unhappy families found great meaning and sense [*sic*] from the consumption and interchange of manufactured things.”⁸⁷¹

But this simply collapses the experience of the happy into that of the unhappy, to sustain the thesis. Twitchell’s own recounting of the study highlights an opposite. Where the goods of family life brought ‘meaning’, this other, different, and greater good gave the manufactured objects whatever ‘meaning’ they had. Perhaps the ‘happy’ families have seen how fetishism over these ‘goods’ risks displacement of their own social relations. The five unhappiest families seem not to recognise this greater good—yet Twitchell’s Pelagian faith *misdiagnoses* their misery, failing even to notice it.

In Augustinian terms, the modern Nietzschean agenda we have seen throughout this thesis is hostile to Manicheism, but hopelessly Pelagian.

c) Children and the ‘aspects’ of love

In Singer’s ‘dilemma’,⁸⁷² the uncertainty hinges on the belief that desire establishes the moral order. To ‘confer’ moral status upon a child by its ‘wantedness’ is tantamount to a simple declaration by a parent (and, by extension, a society), that ‘I want what I want.’ This is also the logic of the shopping mall.

Consequentialist critiques of Singer seem plain. What if a child, wanted at first, becomes unwanted at six weeks? What of children where parent or society felt ambiguously: is the child’s provisional status to continue indefinitely? This provisional status might prove useful if the limitations of childhood should, like the limitations of foetal life, also cease to deliver personhood in any “ethically relevant sense”. The “arbitrary” line might extend by years, grounding the ‘wantedness’ of slavery. (Singer’s exemplars of infanticide, the ancient Greeks, easily sustain this other form of ‘wantedness’.) Other en masse agreements about unwantedness are not without precedent and action: only later are they called mass-murder.

⁸⁷¹ Twitchell, 44.

⁸⁷² See above, 271.

But as in any consequentialist dispute, every speculation has its plausible opposite: a new age of happy children where each child is a wanted; parents impressed by the enormous responsibility of their choice, strenuously taking it seriously; medical personnel driven harder by the evident care in every parent; and so on. Consequentialist debate founders in scenario and counter-scenario. Empirical research becomes ideologically suspect to the point of becoming unusable, and an ideological battlefield turns on prior commitments to the essential goodness, or flawed ‘depravity’,⁸⁷³ of the human spirit; and no ‘conservative counter-consequentialism’ can stand for long against historicist visions of progress.

Even so, moderate liberals will wonder about the security of this morality. With something like ‘rights’, even disregarding their notorious intangibility,⁸⁷⁴ it is difficult if not impossible to determine how they might accrue to the child simply because a parent wants what the parent wants. (Singer himself is vague on exactly this point, as to how the crossover from wantedness to rights might actually occur.) *There is no way imaginable in which ‘rights’ can somehow appertain to a commodity, just because someone experiences a fetish toward it.* When wantedness takes its place alongside rights as another criterion for moral status, the development is mere sleight-of-hand. Perhaps moral status resided elsewhere all along.

Obviously, these problems disappear under a more avowedly Nietzschean stance:

Involuntarily, parents turn children into something similar to themselves—they call that ‘education.’ Deep in her heart, no mother doubts that the child she has borne is her property; no father contests his own right to subject it to *his* concepts and valuations. Indeed, formerly it seemed fair for fathers ... to decide on the life and death of the new-born as they saw fit. And like the father, teachers, classes, priests, and princes still see, even today, in every new human being a unproblematic opportunity for another possession.⁸⁷⁵

This is breath-taking, but not because these adults are difficult to imagine. Chances are that we know such parents, with concern that their parenting is more like sport or incarceration, quite incommensurable with parenting understood even partly as the nurturance of an other. We recognise in Nietzsche’s description a clear (if common) *aberration*. But the stakes are high, and our breath is taken when this kind of parenting appears as an *outcome* of Nietzsche’s moral order. Nietzsche hardly seems to offer the *best* account of life affirmed.

⁸⁷³ For the sense in which we mean this term, see above, 176.

⁸⁷⁴ Cf. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 69, for whom modern ‘rights’ are a convenient fiction, “and belief in them is one with belief in witches and unicorns”, notwithstanding the defence that they exist undemonstrably. (So also might witches and unicorns.)

⁸⁷⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* (1886), tr. Walter Kaufmann, (New York: Vintage, 1989), 107-08 (§194).

In Augustine's logic of love, we want to have children because we are beings constructed with 'otherness' at the base or core of ourselves: "if they come, we cannot help but love them."⁸⁷⁶ But we couch the matter as being about *our* wants, because in a tragic turn to the self, we make a commodity of the other. Thus we are a welter of conflicting affections and passions. (In the logic of love, this could be represented as a disordered tussle between positive and benevolent love, possibly in the absence of ordered rational and cosmic love.) This is why consequentialist calculations on all sides quickly imagine the parent who wants one day but not the next, who wants while baby is sleeping but not when she is screaming.

With a child who is wanted just because she is wanted, it is hard to see how the relationship is not fundamentally subverted and destroyed at the core. 'Wantedness' might be appropriate for a shopping mall, but children are wanted because preciousness inheres in them from another ground entirely. This pathetic, strange new way of 'wantedness' should direct our attention toward children's 'unwantedness'. What 'treasure' in the heart does this bizarre notion protect? What disordered affection impels someone to banish a child from their lives in this way? Rational, benevolent and cosmic love ask: what positive love could possibly be worth this banishment?

Conversely, parenting makes bad Nietzscheans when in the act of parenting, people nurture children, and principles of possession become softened into something else. Indeed, children can so become the locus of visions of the good that different distortions of the moral field follow, placing burdens upon children that are incommensurable with childhood. (Children as 'hope for the future', for example, are expected to solve the disputes or errors of adults, by proxy as it were.⁸⁷⁷) Nonetheless, this turn toward children reflects some tacit rejection of Nietzsche's account of the moral field, as wanting. It is not the best account.

d) 'Sources' of the self and modern moral identity

Charles Taylor's account of 'sources' of the modern 'self' complements my account of the logic of love. He also helps explain why modern contemplation of apotemnophilia should seem so very difficult. I will introduce his account and proceed to a theological comment on apotemnophilia, which will require a further comment about 'identities' sexual and true.

In Taylor's thesis, modern moral identity is grounded in a variety of somewhat contradictory historical sources, two of which I will briefly recount.⁸⁷⁸ Modern good

⁸⁷⁶ Augustine, *Conf.*, 72 (IV.2). See also above, 112.

⁸⁷⁷ In this distortion, children become tools. Benevolence is displaced by positive love for some future vision.

⁸⁷⁸ Taylor's other 'sources' include the affirmation of 'ordinary life', nature, and imaginative self-expression.

thinking is conceived *procedurally* rather than *substantively*. That is, modern good thinking is interested only to demonstrate the veracity of its process, “not in the first instance by whether the outcome is substantively correct.”⁸⁷⁹ But ancient good thinking was fundamentally substantive.

Modern identity also relies upon a stance of *disengagement*.⁸⁸⁰ In Taylor’s understanding of modern identity, a *disengaged* self employs *procedural* reason, to give a conception of values *projected* upon a *mechanistic* order. The ancient view to which he contrasts this is not dissimilar to the moral field that grounds theology’s logic of love. On this ancient view, an *engaged* self employs *substantive* reason, in *response* to a *real, already morally ordered* order. Ideas and values are, on the ancient account, already located in the cosmos, not just in subjects.⁸⁸¹ Thus ‘ontology’ is an ‘ontic logos’ (like the logic of love, it seems); and Taylor seeks to defend this ancient view against the modern view. ‘Sources of the self’ drive the rejections we have seen, particularly the expulsion of limbs and the unwantedness of children. Because reason is procedural, not substantive, there is no answer to the apotemnophilic. Because values are projections, not responses, the question against Onan—of whether ‘unwantedness’ is ever appropriate—never arises; indeed, it seems incomprehensible.

O’Donovan orients us to the moral field that apotemnophiliacs do not see. “Whatever the surgeon may be able to do ... he cannot make self out of non-self.”⁸⁸² “The first obligation of every human being is to hail [the] givenness [of bodily structure] as a created good and to thank God for it, even though he or she may then have to acknowledge that for him or her in particular this created good has taken on the aspect of a problem.”

Clearly though, any culture that finds this difficult as regards apotemnophilia will, in matters of non-married and same-sex sexual intercourse, be opaque to Christian substantive reason. O’Donovan’s discussion derives from the Christian theology of marriage:

[I]n sexual relationships ... the projects of the human spirit are most immediately grounded in the structure of the body. To have a male body is to have a body structurally ordered to loving union with a female body, and *vice versa*. ... Freedom in relationships is ordered by this opposition. This is the

⁸⁷⁹ Taylor, 86.

⁸⁸⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 163. The terrain here is similar to our discussion of Kierkegaard above, 198f. Any contradiction with the consumer economy’s highly engaged loves is explained by the contradictory nature of the ‘sources’—and by the confusion of disordered love.

⁸⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 163 & 186-87 for brief summary statements.

⁸⁸² Oliver M.T. O’Donovan, *Transsexualism and Christian marriage* vol. 48 (Bramcote: Grove, 1982), 16; also next quotation.

recognition from which every person must begin to think about his or her sexuality ...⁸⁸³

But John Finnis' natural law argument against homosexuality, similar in some specifics to O'Donovan, seems easily defeated by Martha Nussbaum's appeal to "a [homosexual] community of love and friendship, which no religious tradition would deny to be important human goods", even if this entails the denigration of "procreative community" (which might "not be based on the best sort of friendship and the deepest spiritual concerns.")⁸⁸⁴

Nietzsche observed that Christianity is a "system"—a "consistently thought out and *complete* view of things".⁸⁸⁵ Of course, he had in mind that Christian thought is a *voluntarist* system, as if its view of the body were "esoteric, meaningful only to those who ... have placed themselves within the closed [ecclesiastical] circle."⁸⁸⁶ Clearly, theology's logic of love admits no place for this kind of voluntarism. But it will assert with O'Donovan, and against Finnis, that O'Donovan's comment about the body makes little sense without its reference to the 'system' of Christian thought.

Calvin's reiteration of Augustine makes this plain. Reason, when allied to some set of loves that excludes the cosmic love of God, simply finds any substantive Christian reason to be unreasonable. Its desires have alighted, voraciously and selectively, elsewhere.

Theology's logic of love appeals to Christian revelation as part of the "system"—not in an act of 'blind' faith, but as a form of 'seeing' faith. Revelation unveils the moral order, sometimes by command but often through other genres (e.g. wisdom, narrative, etc.); and these unveilings are *consonant with* natural order. The revelation that sex is for marriage, and marriage for many things, coheres with what we see to be liveable. Indeed, Nussbaum's protestations against marriage are required precisely because marriage so often prospers.

But even the unveiling of marriage as consonant with the natural order is subsidiary to wider aspects of the Christian 'system'. Nussbaum does not fancifully point to wearisome failures of marriage; yet marriage finally succeeds because of God's greater 'yes' to people (despite their disorder), which supervenes. Theology records God's first word to humanity as a word of blessing (Gen. 1:28a). The intention to bless is consistently retained in divine

⁸⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁴ John Finnis and Martha C. Nussbaum, "Is Homosexual Conduct Wrong? A Philosophical Exchange," *New Republic* 209 no. 20 (1993): 13.

⁸⁸⁵ See above, 221.

⁸⁸⁶ O'Donovan, *Resurrection*, 16.

promises to forgive, reconcile and restore. Paul refers to this supervening context when he can say of various disordered lovers, both sexually so and otherwise, that

this is what some of you used to be. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. (1 Cor. 6:11)

This relationship in Christian thought between affections, natural order, marriage and God's great 'yes', is elegantly summarised (with special reference to same-sex sexual activity) by the St Andrew's Day Statement:

We must be on guard ... against constructing any other ground for our identities than the redeemed humanity given us in [Christ]. ... Our sexual affections can no more define who we are than our class, race or nationality. At the deepest ontological level, therefore, there is no such thing as 'a' homosexual or 'a' heterosexual; there are human beings, male and female, called to a redeemed humanity in Christ, endowed with a complex variety of emotional potentialities and threatened by a complex variety of forms of alienation. ... The [Christian's] struggle against disordered desires, or the misdirection of innocent desires ... will be crowned at last by a character formed through patience to be like Christ's.⁸⁸⁷

To the extent that anthropological theories miss the Gospel's proclamation of redeemed human nature, they "can only imprison the imagination by foreclosing the recognition of emotional variety and development."⁸⁸⁸ The Statement proceeds to describe how in marriage and singleness, two vocations for life "point forward to [the] fulfilment" of all creation in Christ, constituted in "the fellowship of God with his redeemed creation."⁸⁸⁹ When human life is understood in this framework of creation, redemption and reconciliation, "we are freed from human constructs to search out and discover the richness of creation that is opened to us by God's redeeming work." The searching will embrace a variety of goods, including friendship, finally to be fulfilled in the hope of Christ's final appearing.

In theology's logic of love, the primary declaration toward people is not, finally, that they are 'apotemnophilic' or whatever. God's love for them as persons is radically demonstrated at Christ's cross.⁸⁹⁰ The 'pouring in' of this love is not adventitious to God, whose stance toward humanity remains, as always, the settled intention of his holy affection to bless.⁸⁹¹ When God's 'yes' is met with our 'yes', there follows our participation in the

⁸⁸⁷ Timothy Bradshaw, et al., *The St Andrew's Day Statement: An Examination of the Theological Principles Affecting the Homosexuality Debate* (Crowborough: Church of England Evangelical Council, 1995), 5 ('Application' §I). The full statement is also accessible at <http://www.episcopalian.org/cclec/paper-st-andrews-day.htm> (accessed April 2003).

⁸⁸⁸ Ibid., 6 ('Application' §II).

⁸⁸⁹ Ibid., 7 ('Application' §III), as for quotation following.

⁸⁹⁰ This extends Augustine's 'christological hard-point' (above, 93-96) which relied upon Galatians 2:21. (Cf. also Rom. 5:8.)

⁸⁹¹ For Augustine on this 'holy affection', see above, 106-108.

logic of love commended; and old labels of identity fall from us, into decrepit desuetude—as when Paul observes, “this is what some of you used to be.”

4. The logic of love and liberal political philosophy

Given these critiques, and since theology’s logic of love denies voluntarism, I should perhaps proceed to describe theology’s engagement with liberal political philosophy (meant as an account of life together, rather than specifics over law or government). But space forbids this. Liberal political philosophy is complex, therefore any application of the logic of love will give a variety of conversations. I will now flag some examples.

a) A debate to be had

The best practises of church communities give a vision of life together that bespeaks the best aspirations of liberal order,⁸⁹² and hostility to this comment probably reflects what Taylor calls “filiation to the radical Enlightenment.”⁸⁹³ Taylor’s deep concern about radical modern thought is phrased as four tentative questions.⁸⁹⁴ With apologies to Taylor, I will list them in a stronger negative form:

- Moderns are “living beyond [their] moral means” in continuing allegiance to justice and benevolence.
- The naturalist moral project cannot “survive the demise of the religion it strives to abolish”.
- Enlightenment affirmations cannot “be sustained in face of our contemporary post-Schopenhauerian understanding of the murkier depths of human motivation ... without paying Nietzsche’s price”.
- Naturalist affirmations, “conditional on a vision of human nature in the fullness of its health and strength”, cannot move people to help the irremediably broken.

Taylor has a ‘hunch’ that “the potential of a certain theistic perspective is incomparably greater”⁸⁹⁵ than the resources of naturalist humanism, to deal with these concerns. But in an appreciative and otherwise sympathetic review, Nussbaum takes exception to this

⁸⁹² This comment is drawn from the thesis of Oliver M.T. O’Donovan, *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), which unfortunately cannot be outlined here.

⁸⁹³ Taylor, 506; but he uses this phrase in reference to the Frankfurt school.

⁸⁹⁴ Ibid., 517.

⁸⁹⁵ Ibid., 518.

‘hunch’.⁸⁹⁶ Taylor’s view that secularism has brought meaninglessness is “unfair ... Surely Nietzsche is right that this despair is a pernicious legacy of that [theistic] legacy.” Nussbaum also rejects Taylor’s thought that modern humanism seeks to thrive on the corpse, as it were, of Christianity, since this critique does not apply “to an Aristotelian morality”, such as she sees her own to be, “based on ideas of virtue.” On Taylor’s ‘murkier depths’, Aristotle’s vision of people “raised with love, with material support, and with good education [who are] capable of virtue” has not yet had a chance:

Have those happy conditions ever been realised on a large scale? And what sort of evidence should we require before concluding that the human heart is radically defective, that it is insufficient to its own highest hopes? My own hunch is that the best work on the ‘murkier depths’ of the human heart shows something rather different: that love proves to be, in the end, a more powerful source of motivation than hatred, and that even ugly childhood feelings of aggression, and guilt at one’s own aggression, can frequently become powerful promptings toward benevolent action in adult life. ... So the discussion has barely begun.⁸⁹⁷

Barely indeed (which was Taylor’s intention). Christian theology welcomes Nussbaum’s comments, pointing to God’s love shown in Christ’s cross and poured out by the Spirit, and appearing amongst humanity as the powerful cause of many restored lives.

Her comment is also more prosaically welcome. When moderns start reaching past the Enlightenment to ancients for a new view, then Christianity finds itself in a milieu strikingly similar to that in which it first thrived. Nussbaum knows this, and for her, “tensions” between culpability and freedom “internal to the Christian view”, are best supplanted by Aristotelian optimism over human capability against human vulnerability. She recognises that Christians believe the Aristotelian view “cannot explain all the ways in which life goes badly.” If Christians are impressed by early Christianity’s increasing ascendancy, she suspects the auspices of “church power”. “There are many ways to adjudicate this situation”, she concludes;⁸⁹⁸ a discussion is surely to be had.

Whether or not the “happy conditions” have been realised on a large scale (though in fact they obviously have been, since ‘a large scale’ need not be universal), they were certainly realised in Augustine’s life, who not only found that the depths of his heart remained murky but who also found Nussbaum’s Pelagian prescriptions for it to be entirely inadequate.

And one might ask, moreover, whether it is actually possible to turn to religious sources of motivation without also going in for religious authority, and putting that authority ahead of reason. The low likelihood of such an

⁸⁹⁶ Nussbaum, “Our Pasts, Ourselves,” 31, as for all quotations following.

⁸⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁸ Ibid., 34.

outcome, given our cultural arrangements, is yet another motive one might have for choosing the secular view, even if all else were equal.⁸⁹⁹

The Christian respondent can only stare incredulously at liberal perceptions of what it is to ‘go in for religious authority’ (as if agreement with God’s revelation in Christ banishes all thought), and at liberal perceptions of how Christendom actually works (as if secular arrangements are not gradually overwhelmed by the cumulative effect of innumerable personal decisions against them). In any case, surely Taylor’s point (and the matter for discussion) is that all else is *not* equal; and that even if it were, the choice is somewhat more than a matter of siding with the ‘city’ that seems most likely to attain political prosperity.

b) A conversation with scientistic objectivity

Jürgen Habermas’ study⁹⁰⁰ of politics, ethics and praxis describes an Enlightenment dichotomy between a positivistic, value-free rationality, and what he calls ‘commitment’ (the mode of thought that believes, values and desires). If the dichotomy remains unchallenged,

the danger of an exclusively technical civilization, which is devoid of the interconnection between theory and praxis, can be clearly grasped: it is threatened by the splitting of its consciousness, and by the splitting of human beings into two classes—the social engineers and the inmates of closed institutions.⁹⁰¹

By this he seems to imagine a society where scientists and technologists labour in happy isolation, imagining their endeavours to be morally neutral (“the inmates of closed institutions”), who are co-ordinated by elite manipulators (“the social engineers”). In place of this, he argues for a closure of the dichotomy: “Today the convergence of reason and commitment ... must be regained, reflected, and reasserted”.⁹⁰² A kind of reason is envisaged that can incorporate its commitments, while allowing the positivistic reason of technological science to do what it does best. (‘Science’ is broadly inclusive of social, economic, physical and political sciences.) Historically, positivistic science critiqued ideology and dogma. But the price paid is

monstrous enough: from the mainstream of rationality the pollutants, the sewage of emotionality, are filtered off and locked away hygienically in a storage basin—an imposing mass of subjective value qualities. Every single value appears as a meaningless agglomeration of meaning, stamped solely with the stigma of irrationality, so that the priority of one value over the other ... simply cannot be rationally justified.⁹⁰³

⁸⁹⁹ Ibid., 31-32.

⁹⁰⁰ Cited above, 265 n.833.

⁹⁰¹ Habermas, 282.

⁹⁰² Ibid., 281.

⁹⁰³ Ibid., 265. ‘Decisionism’ is Habermas’ term for praxis that advances various societal projects, but which admits of

Habermas greatly values science. His objection concerns the erroneous belief that its objective methods can order our life together. Much more could be quoted from his interesting analysis; unfortunately, it must suffice to see Nietzsche's version of the same objection:

From now on, my philosophical colleagues, let us be more wary of the dangerous old conceptual fairy-tale which has set up a 'pure, will-less, painless, timeless, subject of knowledge' ... here we are asked to think an eye which cannot be thought at all, an eye turned in no direction at all, an eye where the active and interpretative powers are to be suppressed ... There is *only* a perspective of seeing, *only* a perspective of 'knowing'; the *more* affects we allow to speak about a thing, the *more* eyes, various eyes we are able to use for the same thing, the more complete will be our 'concept' of the thing, our 'objectivity'. But to eliminate the will completely and turn off all the emotions without exception, assuming we could: well? would that not mean to *castrate* the intellect? . . .⁹⁰⁴

Here is the point of agreement between Nietzsche and theology (for deliberative logic has its loves). Thus Taylor objects to Habermas' Frankfurt school, which "still remains too narrow. It is still entirely anthropocentric, and treats all goods which are not anchored in human powers or fulfilments as illusions ... In this it shows its filiation to the radical Enlightenment."⁹⁰⁵

c) A range of variously disposed conversation partners

Liberal political philosophers debate about objectivity, which in that arena, is referred to as 'neutrality'. John Rawls is the most obvious proponent of this neutrality; but the neutrality actually requires "a certain conception of the good",⁹⁰⁶ according to Joseph Raz (in anticipation of his own account of a substantive liberal morality). It should quickly be noted that Raz criticises Rawls' early formulation, and more recently, Rawls is careful to explain this 'neutrality' in terms of the overlap of 'reasonable comprehensive doctrines'. (In this treatment, Rawls seems to de-emphasise the importance of 'the original position', the 'neutral' starting point that generates Raz' critique.) That is, people of widely differing traditions, religions, and so on, can come together and share a body of reasonable commitments, which are end positions in their own systems, for co-operation and fairness. To say this, Rawls distinguishes between *reasonable* persons, who "desire for its own sake" a society "in which they, as free and equal, can cooperate with others on terms all can accept ... insist[ing] that reciprocity should hold ... so that each benefits along with the

no real self-understanding.

⁹⁰⁴ Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, 92 (§III.12).

⁹⁰⁵ Taylor, 506.

⁹⁰⁶ Joseph Raz, *The Morality of Freedom* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986), 118; cf. 117-120.

others”;⁹⁰⁷ and *rational* persons, who pursue their own ends “lack[ing] ... the particular form of moral sensibility that underlies the desire to engage in fair cooperation”.⁹⁰⁸

In this version of his theory, then, Rawls is clear about a certain ‘moral sensibility’ and ‘desire’. Yet the commitment to neutrality is retained: Rawls’ ‘justice as fairness’ hovers, as it were, above all ‘reasonable comprehensive doctrines’, refusing to be drawn into conversation with any of them. Intentionally, it absorbs these, but without comment.

But on Raz’ view, liberal political philosophy is committed to a strong moral conception of well-being, which “consists in the (1) whole-hearted and (2) successful pursuit of (3) valuable (4) activities.”⁹⁰⁹ He seeks to name what Rawls, in neutrality, will not. Yet Raz admits that behind his “pivotal ethical precept of public action” there exists a “puzzling” ethical backdrop. Well-being cannot be as pivotal to ethics as it is for public action.⁹¹⁰

The contrast between these positions points to an obvious truth. Liberal governments continually promote and police various desires. Such efforts are pursued within a Kierkegaardian myth of ‘objectivity’, as if the moral rationality of the modern liberal state has no fundamental commitments. When hidden under a mantle of feigned neutrality, proper discussion of properly ordered desire is pre-empted, while at the same time specifically orderings (or disorders) of desire are established at the centre of public morality.

This brief digression is simply to illustrate, without engagement, how theology’s logic of love will address different discussions. Its conversation with Rawls will not be conversation, since he will appropriate many of its loves without acknowledging its logic. A conversation with Raz would concern our respective substantive conceptions of the good, and might go further. But these engagements must be held over for a different investigation.

d) Conversation as attention

Charles Mathewes notices that “the best recent accounts of political liberalism and pluralism ... are grounded on fear” of the alternatives. (Here he names Judith Shklar’s *Ordinary Vices* and Jeffrey Stout’s *Ethics After Babel*.)⁹¹¹ In this sketch, he summarises the

⁹⁰⁷ John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 50.

⁹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁹⁰⁹ Joseph Raz, *Ethics in the Public Domain: Essays in the Morality of Law and Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 3. This is his own summary of his argument in *Morality*.

⁹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vi.

⁹¹¹ Mathewes, “Anthropology,” 214; & 213-14 for discussion of Mathewes following.

liberal dilemma. How can our subjective experiences of valuing be legitimated in a world of plural subjectivities? To answer this, modern liberalism defuses subjectivity by scientistically reducing subjects to objects. Concurrent with this objectifying move is a relativising one, where ‘pluralism’ is minimally affirmed as “a simple capitulation to difference”. Pluralism is barely recognised since there is no real grasp of what actually makes people different.

This pre-emptively disbars the cognitive status of religious claims from moral rationality, so that discussions over religious claims and moral rationality can only perpetually “wobble” between this dichotomy of objectivism and relativism—even though “most” (Mathewes should say who) recognize the dichotomy “as misleading, if not downright pernicious”. But no conciliation is possible, for fundamental to the dichotomy is a certain ontology of life together, which “pictures the world as an archipelago of alterities, each negotiating its way around the others.” But there is an alternative to this ‘archipelago of alterities’:

Suppose ... we undertake to ‘get at’ moral and religious rationality from the platform provided by Augustine’s theological anthropology, which assumes that otherness is already at the base of the self. This would seem to me to alter the case in two important ways: To begin with, it suggests that the attempt to engage one another most fully *as particular and historical persons*—up to and including ‘rational’ debate (whatever that may turn out to be)—may yet allow us to have an account of genuinely universal moral and religious reason. In the interim, we are in no way required to give up our own local rationalities (as if it were some mark of neighborly respect to put everyone at an equal disadvantage). Furthermore, Augustine’s account understands reason not as an autonomous critical-transcendental evaluative device ... but rather, most basically, as a form of *attention*, attending to the ends that the agent desires, and deciding how best to pursue those ends. Reason really is, or truly ought to be, the slave of the passions.⁹¹²

So Augustine’s logic of love actually offers a way forward that modernity cannot afford to ignore (although the hoped-for “universal” is over-optimistic, given the reality of the ‘two cities’.⁹¹³) Modern discourse needs to honour committed reason so that we may properly *attend* to each other. This may simply be to recognise that two parties can accept each other without agreement.⁹¹⁴ Of course, the praxis of rational and benevolent love grounds such acceptance securely, in contrast to the Nietzschean hegemonic commitment to voracious positive love. (Anyone caught in the Enlightened ‘no man’s land’, will have to choose.)

⁹¹² Ibid., 214.

⁹¹³ Unless I have misunderstood, with Mathewes referring to Christian theology.

⁹¹⁴ My thanks to Rev. Michael Corbett-Jones for helping me to see this distinction; others debts to him are too numerous to mention.

I also suggested⁹¹⁵ that theological ethicists might borrow a counsellor's skills, seeking to grasp the perceived importance of whatever is pursued or defended, and to convey our acceptance of the emotion so generated. This clarificatory 'service of elucidation' might precede argumentative disagreement, or not, depending on the circumstance. This was indebted to Aquinas' account of anger, and principle passions, generated by various ends and the paths toward them. Theology's grateful acceptance of all the elements of the moral field (and its account of evil only as a form of lack) gives it nothing at all to fear in discovering the passionate loves, even if disordered, of others. The logic of love gives deep *acceptance* of the other, without requiring *agreement* with them.

5. The logic of love: making best sense of our lives

I will now suggest that theology's logic of love makes the best sense of moral realities that surround us. I will go on to answer the questions put at the start of the thesis, and will finish the thesis with a summary of major elements in the logic of love.

a) 'Making sense' of morality

What better measure of reality do we have in human affairs than those terms which ... make the best sense of our lives? 'Making the best sense' here includes not only offering the best, most realistic orientation about the good but also allowing ourselves best to understand and make sense of the actions and feelings of ourselves and others. For our language of deliberation is continuous with our language of assessment, and this with the language in which we explain what people do and feel. ... What are the requirements of 'making sense' of our lives? These requirements are not yet met if we have some theoretical language which purports to explain behaviour for the observer's standpoint but is of no use to the agent in making sense of his own thinking, feeling, and acting.⁹¹⁶

In contrast, the sciences marginalise important phenomenological aspects of being human, 'changing the subject' so that lives actually lived cannot be explained within scientific terms of reference.⁹¹⁷ For Taylor, if actual life falls outside of a given account of human life, then the account is not making best sense of life. "The terms we select have to make sense across the whole range of both explanatory and life uses."⁹¹⁸ The "various theories of moral judgments as projections, and the attempts to distinguish 'value' from 'fact', fall afoul of this [best account] principle", since we regularly deny such distinctions in our praxis.

Of course, the terms of our best account will never figure in a physical theory of the universe. But that just means that our human reality cannot be

⁹¹⁵ See above, 255.

⁹¹⁶ Taylor, 57.

⁹¹⁷ I have shown something similar in my first chapter, on the scientific account of emotion (above, 27-31), and in this chapter, with Habermas' critique of science (284-285).

⁹¹⁸ Taylor, 58; also next quotation.

understood in the terms appropriate for this physics. This is the complement to the anti-Aristotelian purge of natural science in the seventeenth century. Just as physical science is no longer anthropocentric, so human science can no longer be couched in the terms of physics. Our value terms purport to give us insight into what it is to live in the universe as a human being, and this is a quite different matter from that which physical science claims to reveal and explain. The reality is, of course, dependent on us, in the sense that a condition for its existence is our existence. But once granted that we exist, it is no more a subjective projection than what physics deals with.⁹¹⁹

Ontology should be discerned *through* the best account that can retain such terms as ‘courage’ and ‘generosity’; for these *are* features of the real world, enabling deliberation and personal assessment.⁹²⁰ “My perspective is defined by the moral intuitions I have, by what I am morally moved by. If I abstract from this, I become incapable of understanding any moral argument at all.”⁹²¹ Is this “introduction of the word ‘intuition’ by a moral philosopher ... a signal that something has gone badly wrong”?⁹²² No, since Taylor seeks to ‘make sense of’ those intuitions (rather than using them as epistemological foundations).

b) Scenarios of love

A conception of many basic goods is sometimes derided as ‘intuitionist’,⁹²³ and moral philosophy asserts that moral theories should centre upon some single concept. But moderns assert this in order to “find their way through the dilemmas of modernity by invalidating some of the crucial goods in contest.”⁹²⁴ In contrast, theology’s logic of love embraces subjective responses and an objective field of basic goods. Consider the everyday scenarios that began this thesis.⁹²⁵

- The compassion of “let’s bandage it” reflects ‘enjoyment’ of the other. Such benevolent love might be expressed within family life, and rational love seeks for its expression across any boundaries that prevent the ‘loving embrace of their beauty’.
- Rational love grounds the justice that forbids attack in “you make me so mad I could hit you”. But the intrinsic value of both parties, affirmed by this same justice, might likewise cast light on what good was loved so much as to cause the outburst.

⁹¹⁹ Ibid., 59.

⁹²⁰ Ibid., 69.

⁹²¹ Ibid., 73.

⁹²² MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 69.

⁹²³ Taylor, 76.

⁹²⁴ Ibid., 503; cf. 511.

⁹²⁵ See above, 17.

- “Let’s make love” becomes understood as a positive love *for* marriage (with marriage being for many things). The vocation of the single person is freed for the ‘enjoyment of others’, liberated now from the requirement to make love as a consumer.
- Consumptive disordering is reflected in the voracity and selective sight of “I must have it! How much do you want?”, and “she’ll pay—I’ll destroy her.” Positive love, when love’s other aspects are suppressed, distorts the moral field into the consumer economy and the will to power.
- In contrast, the gospel seems at first incomprehensible: “More to be desired are they than gold ... sweeter also than honey”. This reflects a primary reordering of love’s cosmic aspect, then its other aspects. Divine love poured in begins adventitiously, but is continued with an invitation (by command) to participate in love commended. The limit conditions of Christian ‘law’, once accepted in the context of God’s great ‘yes’, gradually resolve into virtues producing ordinate passion.

It should also be clearer how Christian theology addresses other questions.⁹²⁶

- “Are emotions subject to moral evaluation?” Aquinas said yes, on the understanding that emotions are an aspect of wider moral visions that certainly *are* subject to moral evaluation. Emotions themselves are part of the good of creation; but like all goods, can be disordered to improper ends (thus ‘inordinate passions’, or ‘disordered affections’).
- “When should emotion help direct my action?” and “Should action ever ‘go against’ an emotion?” become questions wrongly framed, since modern conceptions of emotion are incommensurable with directed action. More fruitfully, I would begin to clarify what constitute my ‘affections’, the ‘treasures of my heart’, determining if these displace or are formed by the love of God in Christ. Only then will emotional consonance, or dissonance, with action, become intelligible—respectively, as ‘virtue’ or ‘conscience’.
- “In acts highly charged with emotion, are agents always responsible?” Augustine’s dialogue with Pelagius gives a decisive *yes*, but is capacious enough to acknowledge that agents can be as completely ‘out of control’ as is possible to imagine. But however wild the disorder, there remains the persistent offer of divine grace to forgive and to reorder.⁹²⁷

⁹²⁶ See above, 17.

⁹²⁷ This is the true basis for mercy within a just social order.

- “Do ‘virtues’ and ‘vices’ involve emotional dispositions?”, “Should certain emotions be cultivated?”, and “Can one’s desire be shaped by oneself, and can desire’s emotional dimension so be shaped?” Virtue includes emotional dispositions, but requires “something more”—namely, the framework of Christian theology, and its logic of love. Virtue is love’s conformity to the moral field; it is a gift of divine love poured in; and in the logic of love commended, it is a first-person statement of aim and a tool for second-person affirmation. On these conditions, it can ‘produce ordinate passions’.

c) The logic of love as the ‘best account’

This thesis is an imperfect account of the logic of love; yet the logic of love gives Taylor’s ‘best account’ of morality and moral identity.

God sustains a plurality of goods, ordered telically and generically, where humanity is constituted in being, knowledge and love. Humanity responds in love to the moral field, which elicits love, and gives love its logic. This love generates ‘passions’ such as joy, sadness, hope and fear, and anger. Emotion can therefore point to loved goods.

But in voracity and selective sight, humanity perceives the plenitude of the moral field as a problem of scarcity. In faithless unconcern towards God, reason and love is comprehensively misdirected to ends less than the ‘enjoyment of God and of one another in God’, giving instead a concupiscent will to power. Humanity is powerless to change this orientation: divine love ‘poured in’ by the Spirit is required. This seems adventitious, but the settled intention of divine holy affection is indicated by the cross of Christ; and the adventitious is made accessible in the invitation (by command) to love commended. The Spirit uses the teachings of Christ, the ‘Old Law’, and other aspects of revelation to shape our participation. Under this reordering, all love’s ‘aspects’ find their proper home.

Consequently, goods from justice to friendship to marriage and singleness are sustained. Indeed all the goods of ordinary life are affirmed, when loved appropriate to their place in the moral field. Harmonious communities can form who live in like-mindedness concerning these goods. Journeying together in joyful affections, and participating in the reordering of their passions, they hold forth God’s ‘yes’ to a disordered world. They show forth God’s forgiveness and help, where voracity towards scarcity becomes contentment with abundance. Their restless hearts, which once found no rest, now find their rest in him.⁹²⁸



⁹²⁸ Cf. Augustine, *Conf.*, 21 (I.1).

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